

The Penalty and Redemption

A Sequel to
From Boniface to
Bank Burglar

By George M. White

How the Author Was Converted Through
The Old Jerry McAuley Water
Street Mission

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George Miles White

First Edition

THE PENALTY AND REDEMPTION

By

GEORGE MILES WHITE

Author of

“FROM BONIFACE TO BANK
BURGLAR”

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In “The Penalty and Redemption” is Related the Remarkable Story of the Conversion from Sin of the Author Through the McAuley Water Street Mission, Who Was Known in the World of Criminals as George Miles, alias Bliss, alias Williams, Etc.

George Miles White Projected the Great Ocean Bank Robbery from Which He and His Confederate Mark Shinburn Obtained Nearly Two and a Half Millions of Dollars.

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Penalty and Redemption

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Penalty and Redemption

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FOREWORD

Remarkable indeed is the story of the conversion to God of George Miles White as related by him in this volume. It is perhaps the most interesting turning to God of the latter-day great sinners, and an all-powerful and convincing example of what the Divine One is willing to do for a truly repentant man. Mr. White is an eleventh hour convert whose daily life is never so engrossed with temporal things that he forgets how narrow was his escape from everlasting condemnation. And with him every conscious hour is the settled conviction that he is paying the penalty of his hitherto lawlessness, in the knowledge of his ability to devote only a fragment of a misspent life to the service of God for his boundless mercy.

In the matter of worldly possessions he is absolutely poor, yet he feels rich in the full realization that God has forgiven him. He is able to know this regardless of the fact that a great fortune, accrued as a burglar, has been swept away like dust in the teeth of a gale. And the deprivation of that fortune he does not accept as a punishment. He is glad that the fruit of his wickedness has gone from him forever. Wealth

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of such origin would only create horror in his soul now. Rather he would be a doorkeeper in the Jerry McAuley Water Street Mission, whence the first seed of Christianity were sowed in his heart through the instrumentality of the late Samuel H. Hadley. From this godly man's lips came the words, "Remember, man, remember my brother, that some day you'll have to stand face to face with Jesus Christ!" This warning came to Mr. White while he was in the Cell of a Police Station many months later, but with such power as to strike terror to his soul.

The Author has not spared himself in the chapters following. He wants the world to know how wicked he was that it may the more truly realize how vast is the love of God and how long-suffering He is.

HARRY ARISTIDES DAYTON.

BREAKING
FROM
BONDAGE

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CHAPTER I.

BREAKING FROM BONDAGE.

Life's December was upon me—sowing to the wind, I had harvested the whirlwind!

Pandering to crime, it had me firmly in its octopus grasp! Struggling, gigantically, to free myself from it, I had become bruised and lacerated, as it were, yet, withal, horribly enthralled!

My conscience, never entirely destroyed, but benumbed, vague, cried out as it did when I made the first fatal step down to the broad, alluring road of crime!

Was the awful gloom but a signpost of approach to that inevitable world of terror through which a criminal, ripe with time, must pass in his progress, his final steppings to the grave? Oh, God! how cold were the walls of my place of bondage on that night, yet, they were not colder than my trembling hands! And my brow, too—it was beaded with a sweat like that of death. My dulled brain was a mere toy of unrest. My heart throbs were sluggish, and my heart, sore with an unknown, mysterious force, seemed to be wedged as in a relentless vise, which was as cruel as the rough-hewn bench-bed, upon which my old bones ground painfully!

Sleep, which I cherished by day and looked for to soothe me at night, as a respite from the

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haunting fears that tormented me, was still more distant when twilight came only to fade into the fulness of night. And, had sleep mercifully visited me, of what avail would it have been? If, perchance, I could have slept, dreams would have come to remind me, in greater measure, of the enormity of my myriad crimes. These would have moved in ghastly parade, in panoramic view through my brain, and voices, accusing and just, would have cried insistently, that "retribution" had come. In no manner, seemingly, could I discover the peace that should be the certain heritage of old age.

There was I, destitute, friendless, accused and accursed! And, bending under the weight of crushing years, my wealth was gone like the dissipated sunshine of my youth. Speeding to the grave, on to the sublime unknown, there was none to succor me, and none to offer hope or cheer.

Accused, I was guilty, and must, alas! face the consequences. The curtain, whose dropping on my life was imminent, found me pursued by a merciless law that sought its victims among the poor, and being poor, I must pay the price! Recorded as an outlaw, an enemy of the commonwealth, yet I was scourged with a conscience that would not altogether down. It was like the raw, bleeding flesh, being seared by the white-heated iron fresh from the blacksmith's fire.

I could not sleep though my brain was sorely

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fagged, and my body woefully sapped of strength. I groaned because the dim light in the white-washed corridor, just outside my Cell, was not extinguished, so, mayhap, I could court sleep. Its fitfulness, with each stirring breeze, was but a background of half yellow, against which strange, and yet not strange, shadows curled and twisted into weird but shapely creatures, that, vanishing, reappeared, misshapen, like unto repulsive, creeping things! These shadows tortured me! They ground my soul, spelled all sorts of fears, painted in a masterly hand living pictures which filled me with a nameless horror! And again they conjured up forms, which, speaking, called me back to other days and things I would have forever forgotten.

Oh, for the coming of another day! Better it and whatever would befall me, than the torments of the night. Better to face the inevitable, the legally paved and certain route to the State Prison Cell for which I was destined. Anything to escape, even momentarily, from the realized hell of a present, that was fraught with a yet living conscience, that would not die quickly, but burned and burned, until I was bordering on a state of madness.

I felt a sensation, which, I apprehend, must be sensed by the living human brain imprisoned in the paralyzed clay of the body. A numbness had me within its dreaded grasp, and I wondered if it were the herald of death's foreclosure of its

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certain claim upon my poor body! I was stricken with an indescribable terror. I cried for God to spare me!

“See!” I pleaded, “see! I am on my knees before Thee! Beside this Prison bed I am pouring out my agony! Have mercy on me, oh, my God, if Thou canst! The great wall of crime which I have, in the long years, builded between Thee, all that is good pure and holy and me, is closing down upon me. My eyes seem to be sightless—I am in utter darkness! Hope is swallowed by despair, self-confidence transformed into abject fear, scoffing turned into the full knowledge that Thou, God, commandest the earth, and that the wages of sin must be paid——”

A voice, thick with a night’s debauch, then half-shrill and expressive of rage, shocked me—the voice of a woman whose Cell joined mine next but one.

She had blasphemed the name of the Lord Jesus in a manner to interrupt my agony of fear, and send a thrill of horror through me. Why this should affect me, to whom oaths had long been a familiar practice, I could not tell! I felt a keen sense of pain, and could have cried aloud, so poignant was my mental distress. Even in the unusual experience of the moment, I marvelled at it.

“Woman, beware!” I was on the point of saying, when her blatant tongue sent forth fur-

ther sentences, each one prefaced with the Saviour's name. It was horrible!

"Say, you thievin' coppers want two-thirds of every dollar we women earns!" I heard her say between drunken sobs. "Why can't y'u be satisfied with th' bit that 'u'd be square an' right? Y'u ought t' be 'shamed t' take blood-money of women an' with a home an' a wife an' young—"

Her voice was here choked off, and I heard sounds of a struggle on the cement floor. Then a man's voice, low, tense and filled with suppressed rage, reached me.

"Shut yer infernal wobbly jaw, Diamond Nell, or I'll swat ye another hard one for company!" came from his coarse lips, which must have been quivering with brutish anger. Then once more I heard her:

"Swat an' be——, an' I still say y'u dirty thievin' cops want, take an' keep more 'an y'ur bit!"

It seemed as if she had half wrenched her throat from his grasp, for her tones were yet guttural, and all but inaudible to me. There was another sound as of a blow on the face, and I knew by it that he had again lifted his cruel hands against her. I would have protested, but how powerless I was. I wondered why someone of the officers in the nearby waiting-room did not come in and put an end to this brutality. Or, was it a scene of nightly occurrence, a part of the midnight act in a Metropolitan Police Station-house? These telegraphic thoughts crowded on

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me, only to be interrupted again by the woman's voice. She screamed until the corridor echoed.

"Don't y'u strike me again, Jim! Jim—oh—oh—oh! y'u brute!" cried the miserable creature. Lifting her tones yet higher and shriller, she mingled the Saviour's name with the vilest of words, until every fiber in me revolted at the sacrilege. Then she went on:

"Remember, Jim! remember! y'u devil—y'u an' me 'll be face t' face with th' judge in th' mornin', an' then, mark me, y'u'll repent this night's work, by—"

Her words died away suddenly, and it was not necessary for me to be on the scene to know that the policeman's hand had closed on her throat again, and rendered her speechless.

His voice penetrated my Cell once more, and I gathered from his words, and her violent weeping, that he had broken the spirit which had been rendered unusually defiant by reason of her drunken condition. Presently I heard him close her Cell door and go his way.

May I never again be a witness to another such awful enactment. It was terrible and the effect upon me was electrical. The blasphemy which fell from this fallen creature's lips had aroused memories which, for months, had been in abeyance. The name of the Lord Jesus Christ on her polluted lips, struck a chord that rent my soul, quickened my sluggish heart, and pricked my benumbed sensibilities. Her moans and

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sobs over the loss of blood-money, the price of her shame, stirred me equally as did the cupidity in the unspeakable policeman for the money, aroused my sense of the horrible! But neither of these moved me like her profanation of the name of Jesus, supplemented by the threat that there would be a penalty awaiting her tormentor when they were face to face with the judge in the morning!

“Remember, Jim, remember, y’u devil—y’u an’ me ’ll be face t’ face with th’ judge in th’ mornin’, an’, then, mark me, y’u ’ll repent this night’s work, by——”

Like a flash I was carried back to the last time I was incarcerated in Sing Sing Prison at Ossining, N. Y. I saw there the kindly face of a man whose words impressed me as I had never been before—the face of Samuel Hopkins Hadley!

This was on the platform in the chapel some time during the summer of 1898. That he was a man of God I did not then doubt, little as I cared about it. I did feel that the man, his words, and his works bespoke a practical religion. His God, he said, was the Convict’s God, and he held out hope in the temporal, as well as the spiritual life. He declared that this hope was firmly anchored in the free, simple religion of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Mr. Hadley made frequent and welcome visits to Sing Sing, and that they were errands of

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mercy, I have never doubted. At a meeting in the chapel, about two months before my discharge, my interest was unusually excited. And, really, I could not help it—his influence on this occasion being so powerful that I felt a compulsion to know him better. After the meeting he greeted me royally, and I was not sorry for having gone to him. And, besides, he told me more about this simple religion, in which he claimed to be an earnest, though not infallible worker.

“When you leave Prison, come to the Jerry McAuley Mission and see me,” he said at the termination of the interview, meanwhile shaking my hand heartily. There was something in the clear, piercing eyes of this man of God, which told plainly of the goodness of his soul. And he had not always been thus! Once he was a miserable drunkard without hope of reformation—an outcast of society!

Perhaps this knowledge attracted me to him more than anything else. I, too, was a slave to an appetite for strong drink, a no small factor in shaping the crooked paths of my life. I recalled too, of wondering how it was possible, in any way, for Samuel H. Hadley, or any other man, to inspire religious interest in me, the greatest of sinners and drunkards, whose reformation was reckoned among the impossibilities.

“Yes, Mr. Hadley,” I had promised him, “I’ll call at the Mission, and let me thank you for the



Samuel Hopkins Hadley

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interest you are taking in me. Where is the Mission?"

"At No. 316 Water Street, New York," he said.

But the seed he sowed for me then, fell on soil that was none too fertile, for years in crime had rendered me hardened against religious impressions. I had always, from my youth up, persistently resisted the mellowing influences of Christianizing effort. Indeed, the tares had waxed luxuriant, nurtured by the criminal tendencies to which I catered in the process of accumulating wealth. Little wonder, therefore, that the stout growth of these tares left scant sustenance for the nourishment of good seed.

But I did not forget Mr. Hadley's invitation, and, one day in the summer of 1899, found me inquiring for him at the Jerry McAuley Mission. It was not necessary to make known my identity, for he recognized me at once.

"You are George White!" he said, with a simplicity, frankness, and cordiality, that immediately warmed into my best nature. Then he gave me the free hand of real, true fellowship.

I have a faithful, mental picture of that meeting, which I never want to forget. The same couch upon which he bade me sit, and the chair in which he sat facing me, are in the Mission to this day! I can see him now, sitting in his chair, and hear his deep-toned voice utter language as elementary as it was forceful.

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“Are you a true Christian?” he bluntly asked me, and I caught my breath with the suddenness of it.

“Yes,” was my hesitating reply, but I knew I lied. Why I made this false answer is a mystery yet unsolved, unless it was in my mind to claim a religion that was of the head and not of the heart, as I have heard it described. Perhaps, too, I arrogated to myself the right to thus reply, founding it on the fact that I was a member of a prominent church in New York City. As for being a true disciple of Christ, one of the heart and not of the head alone, that I knew I was not. There was deception in me therefore, when I told him I was a true Christian. To say that I was abashed but faintly portrays my feelings.

Mr. Hadley being a plain man, gave me a sharp talk, in steel-like words. He did not mince them in expressing his opinion of non-Christians, alcoholic drink, and drunkards. He said that self-respect, aside from the duty a man owed his Maker, demanded the renunciation of sin, and all intoxicating beverages. A drunkard, like a sinner, he declared, was offensive to God, and could not enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

But it was Mr. Hadley’s concluding sentence which fixed my attention. It pierced my soul in a startling way, and was the means of giving me the first real conception of the divine warning, “Prepare to meet thy God!”

“Remember, man!” said he, “remember, my

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brother, that some day you'll have to stand face to face with the Lord Jesus Christ!"

And soon after my sinful heart had been charged with this awful injunction, I left Mr. Hadley and the Mission. Shall I say it was with a determination to be a better man? I think so, but, as I have said, crime had hardened me, and soon his warning was a forgotten sound.

But wondrous and mysterious are the ways of God!

The words of this good man of the Mission glowed in my soul that night, as I listened to the weeping of the abandoned woman drunkard in the nearby Cell. I saw them as though they were scrawled on the walls of my Cell in living letters of electrical brilliance.

And then and there with the knowledge which comes but once in a lifetime, I sensed the presence of the hour, in which I must make the final choice. I had reached the dividing line, the ultimatum between sin and righteousness. I felt that I was to renounce sin forthwith or be damned, and forever shut away from the face of God.

I had ridden rough-shod in defiance of my Maker, until He had brought me up short to the crossing. I must decide whether I would go on — on to destruction, on to everlasting damnation, or on to eternal life, where sin is not, and peace reigns tranquil as the depths of the vast ocean.

At first I did not fathom the reason for my being brought face to face with the inevitable

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so suddenly. Then it came with the strength of an avalanche, and with the rapidity of thought. God had employed the lips of an unclean woman to point me out the way of salvation!

“Remember, Jim!” she said, “remember, y’u devil—y’u an’ me ’ll be face t’ face with th’ judge in th’ mornin’!”

Like the explosion of a bomb would rend things, these words from a miserable woman of the streets, cried to a wretched brute of a policeman, opened up in my memory Mr. Hadley’s warning. Had such an agency ever before been used to awaken an immortal soul to its impending danger I could not say—I only knew that from the woman’s evil, thoughtless tongue had been projected the unerring lance of truth. It pierced my hard heart, and turned me from the unpardonable sin.

“Oh God, merciful One!” I pleaded, in abject humility, “at last I am indeed face to face with Thee, and Thy blessed Son the world’s Saviour. And now, oh, hear my broken prayer! Oh! God, as Thou didst in the eleventh hour save the thief on the cross, so wilt Thou also save me in the name of Jesus, Whose precious blood was shed for the sake of the vilest of sinners, of which I am one!

“Through Thy servant, Mr. Hadley, Thou didst once offer me salvation, but I spurned it and Thee, and Thy blood sacrifice! And now, wonderfully, and no less mercifully, Thou hast

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spoken to me again, this time through the lips of the unclean, and my soul hath hearkened! Oh God, I am such a miserable sinner before Thee! Hear me, I beseech Thee! Create within me a new, a clean heart—wash away my manifold sins, and make out of me what Thou canst!

“In youth, when my sisters and brothers gave themselves to Thee, I scorned Thy love, and bade Thee depart from me forever. It appeared to me then, that I had well-nigh committed the unpardonable sin, for my understanding of Thy law was clear. Full pardon was offered me, but I rejected it as haughtily as it was freely extended. Now I have come with a lifetime of sin.

“Even this moment I am before Thee, with a fresh stain on my soul, and for which I must yet pay the penalty on earth, in accordance with the law of man. And, oh God, I ask mercy and pardon of Thee—not for the body, but for the soul! With only a fragment remaining of an ill-spent life, I still ask for mercy, and wilt Thou give it to me?

“As I kneel before Thee, the enormity and quality of my sins appall me. For years and years, Prison walls and bars, held no terror for me. Outlawed by man, I found delight and pride in outwitting man, when, in doing it, I garnered gold. Steeped in the blackness of sin, I have, hitherto, forgotten Thee, nor have I cared.

“But to-night I am face to face with Thee. The teachings of my youth are coming down

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over the sins of years, only to awaken the memory of the prayers of my dear mother, my noble father, and later, those of my beloved wife! They, all, everyone, were Thy servants, who, hearing Thy call, answered gladly, and were gathered to Thy merciful bosom!

"Oh Jesus, Thou who didst die on the cross for the sake of the child of reason and the aged man in sin, is there yet time in which I may be saved? Has the glad hour which saw the salvation that Thou didst assure to the dying thief on the cross, passed for me? As the thief on the cross pleaded with Thee for the salvation of his guilty soul, so do I, as great a thief as he, now plead with Thee to cleanse away my sins, and make me free in the possession of Thy love and forgiveness!

"I remember from my childhood days, somewhat of Thy messages in the Holy Writ. Thou didst say to all mankind, 'Ask and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find.' I am asking tonight, oh blessed Jesus, and, being repentant for my misdeeds, shall I find Thee? Hearken, oh! Jesus, to the prayers of my mother, my father, my wife, which, I feel, are coming up before Thee, as my prayer even now is being lifted to Thee. I am truly, sincerely repentant. Let the prayers and the tears of my beloved ones, shed on earth, and their prayers now before Thy throne, mediate for me! Let these tears that dim my fading eyes, and wet my time-lined

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cheeks, and which melt my soul, laying it bare before Thee, plead for me and wash my sins away, even as Thy precious blood was shed that all sinners might forsake their sins and accept the glories of Thy salvation!

“My tears will not cease to flow. But the Cell does not seem so dark, and there has come over me a new consciousness, a feeling of trust and blissful rest. I know not what it is, oh God, unless it be that Thou hast searched my heart, and, finding me broken and contrite, hast forgiven me. There is indeed, a peace settling upon me, the like of which I have never known. The arrogance that has ruled in all my life is gone. See! I am humble, pleading! Teach me Thy way, for I am ready, and will follow Thee, willingly! And, command me! oh merciful God! If Thou wilt put the heaviest cross upon me, I will go before the whole world, and confess my open and secret sins, that all may know of my repentance, and learn of Thy power to save me, the worst of sinners! Oh, God in Heaven, I thank Thee for salvation!”

“Come, wake up there, you old crook! Hoist yourself quicker! What—on your knees? Well, I'll be ——! Drunk, are you? Or, maybe you 're praying! Come, up with you!”

I heard these words indistinctly. Then a resounding blow, from a heavy hand, brought me to consciousness. My eyes opened to daylight. Straightway I remembered all, and a rush of

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joy flooded me. What a blessed, good world I seemed to be in! Yes, God had not only forgiven me, but He had, also, mercifully given me sleep. The full realization of the change in my life filled my soul. So this was the peace that "passeth all understanding," of which I had heard. It had come to me, too, in the Cell of a Police Station—in the Twenty-second Precinct of New York City, the scene of the boldest and most desperate misdeed of my criminal experience.

I arose from my kneeling posture beside the crude bench which had answered for a bed, as quickly as my stiffened old joints would permit me.

"I've been saved!" I said, to the doorman, smilingly, for he had entered the Cell, and, finding me kneeling, had awakened me.

"Huh!" he grunted.

"You won't mind if I pray, will you?" I asked; "you found me asleep!"

"I'll have to stay here while you do it!" He said this rather gruffly. I thought he suspected I was unbalanced, and might do myself harm. However, he raised no objection.

I dropped to my knees again, and asked God to strengthen me for the ordeal in the Police Court through which I must go in a few minutes, and that I be empowered to withstand any temptation, small or great, which might beset me.

The doorman watched me curiously as I announced myself ready to proceed with him to the corridor. There the patrolman who arrested

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me the night before took me in charge, and thence I proceeded to the patrol-wagon, standing in front of the Police Station door, the officer first making sure I was securely handcuffed to him. Knowing my reputation, he declined to run the risk of losing me. And I—I was resigned.

“Want a lawyer when you get to court?” he asked as we drew near the patrol-wagon.

“No,” I said, and thanked him.

“Better!” he urged dryly. “A crook with your record will get about all the law provides for a second or third offender. You’re charged with attempted grand larceny, and don’t you take your arrest as a good, fat joke! Yours is a mighty lean chance!”

“Hardly a joke!” I told him. “I’m surely guilty, and I’m going to plead that way!” The policeman looked at me doubtfully.

“You’re a fool, a —— fool!” he repeated, with an expletive. “A few dollars would help you a lot!”

No one knew the efficacy of dollars better than I, but being determined to pay the price of my last crime, I made no answer.

We climbed into the patrol-wagon. There had preceded us, the patrolman, Jim, and his victim, the unfortunate woman Diamond Nell, a most wretched appearing, pitiful thing.

Conflicting thoughts occupied me, as we were whirled along toward the West Side Police Court, several blocks further uptown.

CHAPTER II.

IN DURANCE VILE.

A long, defiant shriek from the locomotive's whistle, and, presently, the train rushed up to the station, where it stopped with a series of groans, and nerve-testing creaks. These latter were supplemented by the hissing of the air-brakes mechanism, as it reluctantly relaxed its giant grasp of the throbbing wheels.

The coach doors had, meanwhile, been thrown open, and the brakemen in their automatic voicing cried out that we had arrived at Ossining, N. Y., the home of Sing Sing Prison.

To many of the passengers the place had no significance, except in the fact, perhaps, that its name had been changed from Sing Sing to Ossining. How different in my case!

The great, gray-stone Prison walls and what they hid from the outside world, yawned for me. As hopeful and as brave as I had determined to be, nevertheless, a shudder seized me. But it was only for an instant, and then I was strong and steadfast in purpose again.

As the train drew away from the station, it left seven Convicts—minus the stripes—of whom I was one, standing on the platform of the station. The keepers who had us in charge from New York, seemed willing to gratify us with a linger-



Sing Sing Prison, Ossining, N. Y.

Healy Bros. Photo.

THE SEABORD PRESS

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ing gaze at the last coach, as it vanished in the swirling clouds of dust and blue-black smoke.

Just for a moment a yearning enwrapt me as a warm garment, and I wished that I was free, like those other passengers now rapidly moving northward, and leaving Sing Sing Prison behind. But what the thoughts of my fellows were, I will not venture to guess. Not one of them was happy. Neither did any of them assume the air of bravado, such as I have known in felons en route to serve their sentences. No, we were a serious seven.

Presently I was shaken into even a sterner realization of my whereabouts, by our keepers' command to march, march, march! As we proceeded along the railroad tracks, in the direction of the Prison, now and again tripping over a gnarled tie, I could not avoid contrasting this mode of transit with that of my trip from Sing Sing depot thirty years prior. That was the occasion of my very first conviction for a crime.

"Tall Jim," Joe Kingsland, who was sometimes known as "Howard," and I, had robbed a bank at Adams, N. Y., and had been sentenced to Auburn Prison in that State, for ten years each. Then I was possessed of a fortune accounted as great. Also I had acquired the knowledge that money was all-powerful, even though it was at the command of an incarcerated thief. In less than five weeks after the beginning of my confinement at Auburn, I had, with its potency,

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opened up an underground communication with friends in New York, and had found out who, among the Prison officials, were susceptible to bribes.

Inspector Fordyce Laflin was in charge at Sing Sing, and Inspector Solomon Sheu at Auburn at that time, and both of these worthies were seekers after money of this kind. They soon arranged for my transfer to Sing Sing for \$1,000. That is, I paid \$1,000 to Laflin, but both inspectors were in the deal. This change was to be made so I might be nearer my New York friends, and in Sing Sing, from where I could better plan for and insure my escape.

My trip from Auburn to Sing Sing was attended with all the pomp that a millionaire usually commanded in those days. I doffed the stripes, had to myself a stateroom in one of the railway's finest Pullman coaches, and had plenty of refreshments at my disposal. When the train reached Sing Sing, a splendid carriage and high-stepping horses were at the depot, and in this style I rode up to the Prison gate. The crowd which usually made things interesting about the railroad station, no doubt conjectured that I was an highly important official of the State. Certain it is, I was not thought to be a notorious bank burglar.

Therefore, it was only natural that I should have compared my former entrance to Sing Sing with the later one, emphasized as it was by a

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ride in a stuffy, stifling smoking-car, handcuffed to a keeper, followed by a walk to the Prison gate over railroad ties, subject to the knowing gaze of curious eyes.

And now it was known that I must remain incarcerated within Prison walls until the completion of my term of two years and three months. In the first instance I had come with the knowledge that I was soon to be free in lieu of \$40,000, for Warden Russell and Inspector Laflin had agreed to accept \$30,000, and the remainder was to be the share of minor officials of the Prison, who would conveniently shut their eyes when my plan of escape matured. Indeed, four days after my get-away, I did meet Laflin and Russell in my room at the Astor House in New York, and paid them their price. More, not long after that, my pals, "Tall Jim" and Joe Kingsland, were transferred from Auburn to Sing Sing, through the grace of Inspector Sheu, to whom I gave \$1,000, and a five hundred dollar diamond ring, as a consideration. "Tall Jim" and Kingsland subsequently made their escape, all of which must impress one with the fact, that the Prison officials involved, were not serving the State entirely for their health.

These ugly reminiscences were displaced by the cold fact that our squad of seven was at the Prison gate, which was emphasized by the shock of withdrawing bolts, and the clank, clank of the great gate-latch. In a moment the batch of seven

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“fresh ones” was “tramp, tramp, tramping” along the flagstone walk, and on to the dingy, forbidding main hall of the Prison.

I had no need to be reminded of the lot of the felon, yet there on the wall, and about the first thing to meet my eyes, were the Scriptural words:

“The way of the transgressor is hard!”

Yes, there was truth for me!

But I did not shut the words from my vision, nor had I any wish to, and had I desired to forget the divine injunction, I doubt if I could have, for the awful truth, forced upon me through the blasphemous lips of the miserable woman in the Station-house Cell, was emblazoned on my very soul. Yes, some day I must meet Jesus Christ face to face! And as I, with the others, walked toward the clerk’s office, where the registration books were kept, I breathed forth a silent prayer for divine sustenance.

My pedigree—the longest one—was the last of the seven to be taken. Warden Addison Johnson was in the office. He knew me after a fashion, from my record, which was already told at length in the Prison books. There it was, “George White, alias George Bliss,” and many other borrowed names, each one bringing to my mind an awful story of crime against God and man. And there it was again, “Noted bank-burglar and jail-breaker,” and the like, and without end, it seemed to me.

“This Convict White,” said the warden, look-

ing wisely at State Agent James Jackson, and putting considerable emphasis on the word "Convict," "is a desperate criminal and escaper, I am told."

"There is no doubt of that, warden," said Jackson, eyeing me critically. "This White, or Bliss, as he chooses to call himself, is a most desperate character, and it's true that he made a daring break from this very Prison in 1872."

"So I observe in his record!" commented Warden Johnson, as he glanced at the entry in the book. In a moment he looked up and gasped:

"How is this, Jackson? What do these lines in red ink mean?"

The warden directed the state agent's attention to several words scrawled in the book.

"They tell only what happened," exclaimed Jackson. "This man did escape from here in 1872, and it is a fact that he was pardoned while he was yet at liberty!"

"Impossible, Jackson, impossible! How could a Convict be pardoned, meanwhile being an escaped Convict—still at large?" exclaimed Warden Johnson, incredulously.

"I have often wondered at it myself, warden. Nevertheless his pardon is recorded in our books, and we can't go back of that."

Warden Johnson seemed to be on the point of asking me for a solution of the mystery, but changing his mind, said to Jackson:

"I want you to see that he does n't have a

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chance to escape again, else he may get another, similar pardon."

I thought I read within these words that my life within the Prison would not be that of the favored, if I did not press with gold the palms of one or more of the Prison officials.

Having finished the routine in the clerk's office, the warden directed that the squad be taken at once to the bathing quarters. I had scarcely gotten under the shower-bath, when a Convict "trusty" came in and tossed a suit of stripes—the ugly, broad, black and white badge of infamy—on the floor beside me, accompanying the act with a string of vile language and oaths, which created within me a sensation akin to horror. At the same time a keeper, with a brutal tongue, ordered me to hustle in my clothing, and to recollect that I was not in a Fifth Avenue hotel.

Not many minutes later found me in the tonsorial department of the Prison, and, presently, I was out again with my moustache gone, and but precious little hair showing on any part of my scalp. Then I was bundled into a Cell that was, in all its environment, horribly suggestive of filth and vermin. Thus I was again installed in Sing Sing Prison, but I vowed, through the help of a merciful God, to make it the last time.

Though I was again behind the bars, I possessed a sensation of rest, of perfect peace, a sort of newness within me, that was completely satisfying. Never had I experienced a similar state of

mind, unless it was when God spoke to me in the Police Station Cell on that memorable night. I held the knowledge that God had forgiven my manifold sins, but the marvel was that he had offered pardon to me—one who was so infamous among all of the world's sinful, erring creatures!

It must be that I had taken God at His word, for had He not said that if the wicked man forsakes his way and his unrighteous thoughts, abundant pardon will be the reward of such earnest seeker? And, at that moment, there came from the memories of long ago, these comforting, assuring words, from God's glorious promises :

“I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness!”

And God had upheld me! In the Police Court where I was arraigned, as a preliminary in the legal procedure, I found that His sustaining power was with me. And during the two nights which I spent in the Police Court Prison, His presence was still with me, unerringly pointing out the only path I should traverse, and revealing to me, beyond all doubt, that, being guilty, I must pay the certain penalty.

In the Tombs, too, the jail of the county, that deep grave of millions of blasted hopes, the crucible of dried-up tears, that Port of Separation of the Good from the Evil, I had Him yet with me, the same, sure, Great Arm, upon which to lean; the same assuring Divine Voice heard by

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faith, to support and encourage me on. When brought before the Court of General Sessions, and the learned head of the court, Judge Martin T. McMahon, asked me, in solicitous tones, why sentence should not be imposed upon me, there was nothing to do but submit to the inevitable, for I was guilty, and, being guilty, why should I not pay the penalty? Realizing this, I was willing to pay the debt in full, so long as He was my Guide and my Staff. I determined that I would not falter in the way, while I had Him with me, and had His answers to prayer, as a bulwark of defense.

My sleep last night was comparatively restful, though the environment of the Cell was of such a character as to bring into revolt my love of cleanliness. The bed was hard, the clothing filthy, and there was a decided dampness in everything, not to speak of the never-to-be-forgotten, all-pervading Prison atmosphere.

Thrice in the night I was disturbed by the snooping presence of a rat, which persisted in being my bed-fellow. I was first awakened by a warm weight, nestling heavily at my throat, which seemed, in my semi-consciousness, to be almost suffocating me. Only when I had flung the thing against the Cell-wall, was I made acquainted with the identity of this nocturnal caller. Then it ran squealing away—as I thought.

On two other occasions that night, the impu-

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dent, aggressive rodent called upon me, repeating precisely the program of the first visit. The last time it must have been so badly received, as to come to the conclusion that it was not a welcome adjunct to my quarters. But, as I have said, aside from the really momentary sensation of the "creeps" occasioned by this rodent, I passed a night tranquillity.

My surroundings, however, were different from those experienced in other Prisons where I served sentences. In former days I had money in plenty, and that bought me all the comforts I wished for. Now, however, a change in my circumstances had come. All my possessions of the kind earthy, had vanished. I was poor and despised—despised on the outside of the Prison walls, because of my crimes, despised and brutalized inside of the bars, because I was penniless, and therefore impotent to buy salable privileges, which could be enjoyed only in violation of the law and rules of the Prison.

My surroundings but emphasized and impressed upon me more forcibly the Divine declaration I had read on the wall in the main hall, that "The way of the transgressor is hard!" I had transgressed the laws, and, therefore, what else must I expect other than to pay the price that a transgressor should pay?

One thing I missed from my Cell was a Bible. I saw Chaplain George Sanderson in his office, and he gave me one of large print, so complete

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explanatorily, that a child would understand its teachings. How grateful I was to him for this boon! I must tell how deeply impressed I was with his sincerity. Truly this Chaplain seemed to be a Christian, a godly man, and in every way worthy of his reputation. That my observations anent him may not appear too peculiar, it should be explained that I had come in contact with Chaplains not a little during my wide experience as a Convict. Of these I speak truthfully, when I say that Chaplain Sanderson was the first one to impress me as being really sincere in the profession of Christianity. His religion, theoretically, seemed to be sound, and his religion, as practiced, contained a fervency, simplicity, and beneficence, that quite won me. He showed himself to be a man of God to whom I could appeal for counsel—could appeal though I was inexperienced in the Christian pathway. I felt God had raised up for me this good man, that my efforts to be a Christian might be crowned with success, that my salvation might be assured. His immediate interest in my temporal and spiritual well-being, gave me great hope, and an abiding faith in him.

The atmosphere of Chaplain Sanderson's office was devoid of graft indications, which so pervaded those of other Chaplains in Prisons where I had been. When I was serving my first sentence in Sing Sing, Chaplain Schoonmaker's office was notoriously corrupt. Very little atten-

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tion, if any, was paid to the saving of Convicts' souls, for soul-saving was thoroughly subsidiary to a grasping after gold to be had through political connivance.

The Chaplain studied his political manual far more industriously than he dwelt upon the teachings of the Bible. The revelation of the next election of a governor was of far greater import to him, than the Revelation of St. John, or the beauties of the writings of Matthew, Mark, or Luke.

I well remember those old days! A Convict desiring religious instruction, or anything appertaining to his Christian welfare, had to seek it for himself. The good shepherd of the flock never went up on the mountains of sin, or rather, in the by-ways of the Prison, in search of lost sheep. The lost sheep, indeed, had to scurry to find the shepherd, and, upon finding him, had to pay well for his acceptance in the fold, and for the Christian counsel he obtained. Inasmuch as there were mighty few Convicts who confessed to be lost sheep in quest of a good shepherd, Chaplain Schoonmaker was not unduly harassed by a preponderance of Christian effort, to the embarrassment of his evidently more preferred work of preserving his tenure of office, and the accumulation of filthy lucre thereby.

But, how vastly different was Chaplain Sanderson! His greatest desire, next to the salvation of his soul, was to be instrumental in pointing

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out God and His love, to the lowliest Convict in the prison horde. And, he did not tarry for the lowly ones to come to him. Day by day he labored among them, and sought out whom he might help to save from sin, and earnestly pleaded with the most hardened among them all.

From the moment the gate of Sing Sing closed me in, my prayers were earnest and my efforts unceasing, that I might be able to carry the cross of the Christian, faithfully, and uncomplainingly, but, at times, it was almost greater than I could bear.

Mindful of the Scriptural injunction, that I must not hide my light under the bushel, and zealous to fulfil my promise to God that all men should know me as an example of His wonderful, saving power, I trimmed my lamp, and kept it burning as brightly as I was able to, though I fear it did but feebly light the way for my fellow wayfarers. But at least I endeavored to do my best, though it was haltingly.

No one could have started out with a more steadfast purpose than I. And how hard is the course of the transgressor who has forsaken his unrighteousness, I learned as the days went by. My record, known to every inmate from one end of the Prison to the other, sadly handicapped me. Advanced in years, somewhat feeble of body, I was accused of turning to God because I could no longer gain a livelihood by means of the cunning I once notoriously possessed. Attempts were

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very often made to discredit my motives. Ridicule was my daily sup, and contempt at the hands of calloused thieves, was the reward of effort to hold up the Word of God as a light to be followed.

By day and by night, the word "hypocrite" was whispered in my ear. If I did not hear it while at my daylight tasks, which were not made easy by the keeper because of my age, then I heard it hissed through the grated door in my Cell, in the early night, by a "trusty" Convict, who chanced to pass by. No one believed me, so it seemed, except good Chaplain Sanderson. He had faith in me, and by word and look did what he could to smooth my tempestuous way.

In all the trials of the first few days of my sojourn in Sing Sing, I failed not to pray. Spiritual strength was asked for from the Divine Source, and though I prayed I knew but little how to. It was just an opening of the heart in which there was absolutely nothing to be concealed. At morn, noon, and night, I prayed with the simplicity of the child, for I was indeed an infant, a weakling, toddling along in the life hitherto to me, unexplored! No supplication so completely comforted me as the simple words I was taught to utter at the knee of my mother:

Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to keep.
If I should die before I wake,
I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to take.

And, frequently, I breathed to God a part of that universal prayer:

“Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us!”

In a weak moment, while kneeling at my bedside one night, I attempted to pray as I had at my conversion in the Police Station Cell, but my thoughts were as lead, and my tongue seemed to be dumb. Then, I realized that a quickened soul, struggling back from the brink of overshadowing perdition, would only be accorded the power to pray like that. God at that time searched into the innermost recesses of my heart, and, finding that I had cast my all, fully and freely, on the altar of His tender mercy and boundless compassion, created in me a sudden and full knowledge of the awfulness of my lost condition, which must have lifted high the flood-gates of my soul, that I might pour out its agonizing plea for salvation.

It seemed to me that God, in His all-wise plan of my salvation from a wasted life of sin, no longer required the anguish of soul I suffered that night. Indeed, knowing my physical frailties, I doubt whether my poor, abused body would have been able to withstand another mental struggle like it. And not again did I thus venture to encroach upon that world of supplication. Rather,

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thereafter, I humbly prostrated myself before His throne of mercy, and realizing my nothingness, drew nigh to pray, with faltering tongue and broken language, for the bestowal of His beneficence upon me. And so, day by day, He heard my petitions.

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CHAPTER III.

THE PASSING OF TOM BAKER.

From the beginning I was resolved to bear without outward murmur or complaint the burdens of Prison life. How great some of these were, only the perusal of my memoir will reveal.

As I had served several terms in State Prisons, my assignment to duty placed me in a Convict squad which was divided into three gangs, and recognized as the Third Termers. To be numbered among this squad was to be put in the dual position of being subjected to the greatest degree of ignominy and laborious tasks of the most servile character. First Termers, openly and without restriction, sneered at the Third Termers, and when favorable opportunities arose, actually heaped indignities upon them.

In the college days, it is the freshman who is put through the sprouts, and thus initiated into the ways and by-ways of College life. In my Prison life it was quite different. The old-timer, the Convict of experience, hardened in crime, and, presumably, possessed of all the knowledge that the novice lacked, was the victim of initiation. The greater the length of his Prison record, the more liable he was to be the recipient of the rough, coarse and, not infrequently, brutal and inhuman Prison custom.

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I have endeavored to think that the sore trials which fell to my lot, seemingly at the hands of my Fellow Convicts, were mine more by accident than by design. However that may have been, it has always been my desire to let the facts tell the tale, that the Divine One and the justice-dealing public, the American people, may judge me. As for the punishments I received from the Prison officials who had charge of my body, they were accepted as a part of the price I was called upon to pay as an atonement for my crimes. Whether or not I was too grievously afflicted, I will not venture to say. The verdict in this regard I also must accept at the hands of God and my fellow-men.

In less than a week after my incarceration began, I was installed in scavenger duty. This included a class of work highly offensive to a man unaccustomed to the conventionalities and niceties of life. To one whose early youth had been toned with refining influences, and whose later dollars were potent to thrust him in good society, this menial employment for the State, was not alone bitter punishment, but was, at the same time, positively nauseating. And then, there were periods when my body was scourged almost to the limit of endurance. Confident I am now that God's sustaining power kept me from crying out under bodily distress, that my punishment was more than I could endure.

Frequently I was called to the Prison yard on

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railroad duty, which also took me outside of the walls. This task consisted in dragging railroad freight cars in and out of the Prison, and unloading them. The officials did not take pains to select fair weather in which to perform the work, and, perhaps, they could not have done differently had they been inclined toward leniency.

Nevertheless, the December days I spent in and about Sing Sing were remarkable for the bitterness of the cold. The icy Hudson River, with its broad sweep, lay up against the west side of the Prison, and was only separated from the yard by a formidable iron fence. In the north wall, the Prison gate opened to a spread of railroad tracks, on which were rolled the cars that were switched to them from the main line in front of the Prison. The north and west winds seemed to blow continuously, and with a strength and iciness that sent them piercing into the blood, and chilling the marrow.

To successfully breast this trying weather, it required the blood of fresh young manhood. Adversely, the Third Termers were composed, for the most part, of men well advanced in years, which, of itself, unfitted them for these tasks. In addition to this handicap many of them were in feeble health, and, in several instances, far advanced in the stages of consumption. These latter, very often, won my sympathy, and more than once I was so moved to pity that I would have protested had there been any chance of

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obtaining relief for them. They, too, were paying the penalty, and that it was a cruel one I dare not gainsay.

I was more than three-score years of age and though much better equipped to withstand the slavish work than they, it bore me to the earth only too often, until I was glad to escape to the seclusion of my Cell, where I was kept in solitary confinement, until strong enough to resume my task again.

I think it was in the second week of my incarceration, that there came a sudden increase in the manufacturing done in the Prison shops. This cause produced the logical effect of a great influx of freight-bearing cars, and a consequent unloading and reloading of them with Convict-made wares. This placed an enormous strain upon the human machines—the Third Termers! From the time of their induction into this work, which was early in the morning until the locking up hour at night, it was an incessant grind, and an awful rush, entailing great exhaustion upon the men. There were days when the duties waxed so exacting that the midday meal was not reckoned a necessity in the manual of the careless, or should I say, heartless keepers! Not infrequently I saw a poor emaciated fellow sink in his tracks in the snow, and it seemed to me that he was only removed in order that his body might not cumber the railroad tracks, and, in consequence, retard the moving of cars.

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One day in the beginning of this period of multiplied labor I shall not forget, nor will my fellow-victims of the squad. And, right here, I must describe the scene. There was an apology for a yard, which was corrugated with the rails of three tracks. That is, with a snowless ground, the corrugation was there in view, but on this day the rails were undisclosed because of a four-inch layer of hard-frozen snow, and newly formed ice. At least ten freight-weighted cars stood ice-bound to the tracks situated farthest from the Prison gate.

Not a few of the squad had failed to respond to the breakfast call. The hardships of the previous day had left them in their cells at night, more dead than alive. So, off to the hospital they were dragged or carried for physical repairs, or, death not coming, happily to release them from their torture, bundled in with the next transfer party destined for Clinton Prison farther north in the State. That left the several gangs considerably depleted, and, thereby, still less capable of coping with the gigantic task which they must perform.

As I have heretofore related, the morning was bitterly cold, the thermometer having well-nigh ceased to register its frigidity. There was a searching northwesterly wind blowing, that fairly ate into the vitals. The cheap, threadbare suits of stripes, always the clothing of the Third Terriers, were little protection from the devour-

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ing cold which seemed to burn the flesh like hot iron.

It was a Prison regulation that Convicts performing such work, must be supplied with gloves or mittens, but these were not in evidence, except in rare instances. The man who was fortunate enough to have covering for his hands owed it to his perspicacity in stealing a pair of mitts or gloves.

I recall that I could have had, and did have a pair of mittens, but I gave them to Tom Baker, a frail fellow, a comrade whose Cell was but a few paces from mine.

Of nights his incessant, dry cough, often awoke me to the fact that he would not long be a burden to the State, nor to the world, except for the nameless grave he must soon fill. As I have said, I gave my mittens to him, and though he was a criminal with his wife's blood on his hands and soul, he appeared to be grateful, and I realized a sense of gladness in doing it. Therefore most of us were gloveless or mittenless, and ill-prepared to face the weather of winter days.

As a contrariety, the trio of keepers who controlled us, one at the head of each of three gangs, were bundled up in woolens and fur coats, and their hands were comfortably geared in wool-lined gloves. Neither of the three failed to have with him the stout hickory stick, which too often was plied upon the head, shoulders, or back of a Convict, who happened, in any way, to offend

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the dignity of one of these high and mighty personages. One of the trio on that particular morning, must have met with some serious disappointment the preceding night, for he was in an exceedingly disgruntled frame of mind. At his best he was offensively overbearing, but on this occasion there was the brute ferocious flaunted in his every word and act.

A dozen of us, unfortunately, were in the gang which came under this fellow's immediate command. I presume he did not especially select me as a mark at which to fire the guns of his displeasure, but so it appeared to me. At any rate, he was not at all tardy in directing his attention my way, as I found out.

“Pick up them drag lines, you old fakir, and don't stand looking like an undertaker at a funeral!” he shouted at me, meaning the half dozen lengths of coarse rope which lay almost buried in the snow, and which were used as draught ropes by the Third Termers. Each gang was provided with a rope, at one end of which was a large iron hook shaped to fit in the draw-head of a car, where it could be held in place by a coupling-pin.

As I attempted to lift the bundle of ropes and iron, he kicked his hob-nailed boots against one of the frozen coils as a sort of emphasis to his command. The result was extremely painful to me, for a nail in the boot cut a ragged gash across the back of my right hand, which was excep-

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tionally sensitive, because of its half-frozen condition.

For an instant I withdrew from the task to stem the flow of blood that he plainly saw was staining the snow. The pain which he had accidentally or purposely inflicted upon me did not appear to excite either his sympathy or interest.

"You're wasting — precious time, you old fool!" he shouted again, puncturing his coarse remarks with two stinging strokes of his cane across my bent shoulders. For the moment I was staggered by unpreparedness, and then down on my knees I went with considerable force, and surprising suddenness. When I had struggled to a standing posture again, the left side of my face was bleeding freely from half a dozen small jagged wounds, caused by a rough patch of ice over which it had scraped.

"Blockhead! Dolt!" roared the keeper, intermittently, in a string of oaths. "Of what earthly use," he added, "is such an old, canting hypocrite as you!" Then, with a hand that was far from gentle, he shoved me aside to make room for the next nearest Convict, who proved to be No. 333 of the squad—Tom Baker.

"See if you can pick up a few ounces of rope!" he bellowed at him. The words contained a decided vein of sarcasm clearly intended for me. I felt my blood tingle a little!

Poor Tom weakly gathered up the mass of rope with his hands in the mittens I had given

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him, and moved on ahead of the gang, his haunting, dry cough beating a sort of dirge to his every step. I, with the others of our gang, followed, still bleeding, but resolved and prayerful.

The cars which were to be transferred, stood outside of the Prison yard, and pretty well up toward the depot, which was probably three hundred yards distant from the Prison proper. The one that my gang was expected to tackle first, was heavily laden with dozens of bags of cement, and several scores of barrels containing lime. The car must be hauled along the tracks into the Prison yard, and alongside a platform. After that it was the duty of the gang to carry the cement and lime from the car to the storehouses which were some distance away.

As Tom Baker staggered on with his heavy burden, it was apparent that he would not be able to stand the strain long, and my heart bled for him, smarting though I was with the distress of my wounds. I wondered, indeed, if he would reach the car and succeed in stretching the draught rope in front of it. Though the poor lad was a sorry spectacle, no one in our gang, nor any one of the entire squad of Third Termers, dared to enter a protest. To do so would have, as each man knew, uselessly invited the displeasure of all of the keepers, without benefiting in the least the object of pity. The penalty for creating this displeasure was of such a character that no one felt quite brave enough to risk the

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consequent three days of solitary confinement in the Dark Cell, with its menu per diem of a small square of black bread, and a thimbleful of brackish water.

As best he could, the wretched Tom tottered along to the first car. When he halted in front of it and threw down the rope, I saw that he was stumbling about as a blind man might have done. Then he fell prone on the snow-crust, where he lay panting for breath, a sight to be witnessed with naught but profound compassion. I was smitten to the heart. Pushing forward, I was on the point of offering him assistance, when the keeper seized me roughly by the shoulder and hurled me backward.

"Are you in charge here?" he demanded with a sneer.

"I'm sure I am not, sir," was my quiet reply, "but I'd like to be for a moment. It seems to me that No. 333 isn't feeling well this morning."

"And that's none of your infernal business," he cried, angrily. "Let me inform you that you're interfering with what is no affair of yours, and I won't have it. I'm the keeper here, and you're simply an old white-livered Convict!"

"Your pardon, keeper," I said, stepping back a pace or two. He turned to Tom Baker.

"Up with you, No. 333," he cried, as with brute strength he grasped the motionless consumptive by the lapels of the coat, and sought to drag him to his feet. The rotted cloth was rent

with the effort, disclosing underneath it a folded newspaper which Tom had spread over his lungs to protect them from the cold. When the cloth yielded, No. 333 fell back on the snow again with a lead-like thud, that must have bruised him.

"Wait—keeper," he said, in a hoarse whisper that thrilled even the most hardened of the Third Termers. My compassion swelled beyond all control. Bleeding though I was, it required but an instant to brush aside the keeper, and put myself beside this stricken comrade. I tried to gather up his emaciated body in my arms, but was unequal to the strain, unexacting as it was. Two of the men boldly came to my assistance, and together we raised him to a sitting posture.

But the grim, merciless messenger of death was knocking at Tom's door with a certainty that none of us could misunderstand. A rivulet of bright arterial blood trickled from his lips, and threaded its way to the immaculate snow, where in crimson vividness it stood out in startling contrast.

"Wait—wait—oh, wait," the suffering man murmured, his voice pitifully weak and gurgling with the flow. A Convict removed his coat and spread it on the snow. Gently we laid No. 333 on it. He made another effort to speak, but the ominous letting of lifeblood choked his utterance.

"Off with your coats, boys!" I said to three of the Third Termers, and while they obeyed, knowing intuitively the reason, I chafed the hands



Bread Line at the McAuley Mission on a Christmas Day

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of the poor fellow. By the time my comrades had covered him with their coats, he gave symptoms of returning consciousness.

"Better, comrade?" I asked, and it was encouraging to note that he understood. Then I put my lips to his ear and whispered:

"Pray, Tom, pray to God while you have time! In another hour it may be too late!"

He shook his head in a hopeless sort of way. I felt that here was a soul about to go to its Creator—a soul that was blinded by the blackness of its crime. I felt that to make him know I must speak in a language that would be familiar to him. Bending even closer, I whispered:

"Dump the old game, Tom, and take a tumble! Pray to Jesus! He'll hear you! Don't mind if your life is blacker than hell. I swear that Jesus will save you! I'm a square one, Tom, and am not lying to you! He's forgiven me, and that's why I can swear to you! I'm saved, Tom, and am going to Heaven! You must go, too!"

He opened his eyes widely, wonderingly, incredulously—eyes that were almost beautiful, I thought.

"It's God's truth, Tom—will you pray?" I urged.

"I don't know how," he breathed, so softly that I could scarcely catch the words.

"You don't have to know how, Tom, old pal," I whispered, feeling my eyes filling, and my throat throbbing with emotion. "Just think,

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yearn, reach out, believe, no matter how black your crimes! Pray to Him—say anything—one word, two, a dozen—this, ‘God be merciful to me, a sinner!’ Say those words twice, and belief will come—He ’ll hear and forgive you! I swear it, old pal! He saved me, and He ’ll save you! Won’t you try, Tom?”

He nodded his head feebly in the affirmative, and I saw his lips move. It seemed to me that there was a sudden change in his pale face—it became illuminated, strangely illuminated. Could it be that hope had entered his stricken soul?

All this occupied but a moment, and, in the meantime, the keeper had been more deeply stirred with pity than I thought it was in him to be. He had hastily sent half a dozen of the gang back to the Prison for blankets, brandy, and a litter.

By the time these things arrived, No. 333 was able to be moved, and I was one of those who lifted him on the litter. The strain was almost too much for his feeble strength. One of the men drew the cork from a brandy bottle, and placed the liquid to Tom’s lips. He tried to turn away his head.

“Don’t,” I said! “he can’t stand it! ’Twould strangle him!” In my heart I believed that Tom had, at last, repelled his lifelong enemy—the real author of his terrible record of crime.

As they started away with him, I quickly reached for his hand and whispered:

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"Is it all right with you, Tom?" It seemed as if he pressed my hand. That was all the answer I got, except I discovered an unusual glad light in his eyes. In some manner I was led to believe that he had found the peace which cometh from God, and which passeth the understanding of the wicked mortal, and is potent to deliver from the torments of sin the vilest transgressor of Divine law. I can not positively say that he made his peace with God, but I firmly believe he did.

I walked along by the side of the litter for a few paces, intending to accompany him to the hospital door, but the gruff voice of the keeper halted me.

"About face, White!" he commanded, "and get your old hulk on top of that freight car, and let off them brakes!"

I took a lingering glance at the receding form of No. 333, and straightway turned away to obey. I have ever since carried a vivid picture in my memory of him as he appeared that day, for he never came in my life again.

It was no easy thing for me to climb the iron ladder which extended up the side of the tall box car, to the top of which I had been told to go. I swung myself clumsily and safely up the first few frosted rungs, but, unfortunately, my snow-clogged shoes slipped, and with a groan I fell backward to the earth, a distance, perhaps, of six feet.

In the desperate effort to save myself, my bared

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hands were thrust in the snow. Flushed with shame over the sorry figure I was cutting, I scrambled to my feet, and made another attempt, but with what result one may well conceive, when my wet hands came in contact with the frost-encrusted iron. My palms and fingers clung, became glued as it were, to the rungs, and to remove them instantly meant to lacerate my flesh. That alone was sufficient to make me hesitate, to say nothing of the burning sensation experienced through the contact.

The keeper saw my uncertainty, and it angered him. With an oath he caught me by the coat collar, and yanked my hands away from the car, leaving small patches of flesh on the rungs. I could have howled with pain, but I set my teeth determinedly, meanwhile praying in my soul, that God would take away from me the burning desire to kill the brute with anything that would serve as a club. I did snatch a coupling-pin from the car-bumper nearest me, but instead of braining him, I slid it in its place, after another Convict had inserted the hook of a draught' rope in the opening of the drawhead.

Upon leaving hold of the pin, its shank bore other shreds of my flesh and stains of blood. Again I could have cried with excruciating pain, but controlled myself with a mighty effort, while from my heart I breathed a silent prayer for spiritual and physical strength to still continue to uncomplainingly bear the wages of my sins.

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Long I contemplated as to whether or not I would cumber these pages with the manifold trials of that day, with the multiplied experiences of the succeeding days and weeks, in which I remained in Sing Sing—with the tale of the indignities, the cruelties, the repeated inhumanities, the concentrated horrors, the like of which even the black slaves of the South, in the darkest hours of their bondage, never endured or suffered.

I feared my motive would be misunderstood, if I told too much of a plain tale. There might be those, too, who would accuse me of attempting to set myself upon the pedestal of the martyr, when, of a truth, I only desired to show, in every act and word, how efficacious was the religion of Jesus Christ to succor in the day of tribulation so debauched and wicked a creature as I.

I argued that a diary of my daily hardships, a veracious chronicle of the darkest side of Sing Sing, of the undercurrent of officialdom there, in so far as it dominated the lives of the Convicts, and shaped their future, would be of immense value in the way of bringing about a much-needed reformation. It seemed to me that the world ought to know, must know, what sort of influence the Prison keepers were exerting over their charges—whether it served to force the penalized man, who yet had a soul, into a still deeper pit of degradation than he had hitherto descended to. Or, whether this official influence was of

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such a character as to uplift the soul wallowing in the abyss of unrighteousness to a better, a purer life, where there would be more likelihood of fitting that soul to be with the Divine Power Who created it, and for the betterment of the world at large.

It occurred to me that there might be those who would, in all conscientiousness, and with logical foundation, doubt me, the lowly Convict, question my sincerity, and find me guilty of crucifying the truth on the altar of self-exaltation. If only a few believed this, even then the cross would be heavy to bear. Adversely, if many regarded me as an apostle of untruth, a son of the Father of Lies, then woe unto me, and to the good that I would, through His will, accomplish! All would be absolutely overwhelmed in a vast sea of prejudice.

I prayed to God with my soul fervently, irrevocably committed to Him. I appealed for guidance in this regard, in the halting, irresolute style of the one precipitately transported into the beauties of Salvation—one whose faltering tongue was too uncertain for fluency in prayer, but whose heart-earnestness gave him admission to the Throne of Indulgence.

Having one's heart searched by the all-seeing Eye, that every vestige of hidden sin might be brought into the pure sunshine of truth, means that room has been created therein for as perfect a faith as a soul may possess and exist in

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the flesh. And thus was I tested of God, and taught to recognize in His gracious voice, as it spoke to my soul, the reassurance that He would stand by me, even unto the finality of all things worldly. In the end, His still small voice bade me speak the truth, but revile no man! Sufficient was it to permit the iron to sear where it would, but the artisan guiding it must harbor no bitterness in his heart, believing and never doubting that in God alone was vested the power to say: "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord!"

I have written of the evil things that befell me as best I could, hoping that by my example others, enthralled in the snares of sin, might be saved. In no word or deed, regardless of adverse interpretation, have I intended to maliciously inveigh against any one. In each intonation, by the look of the eye, flourish of the hand, in my goings and comings, I have labored to have the spirit of God speak through me, a feeble instrument in His scheme of salvation.

Therefore, it was to the glory of my Master that I was able to bear, with no outward lamentation, the bruising and starving of my body, the humbling of my pride, and that which was of equal moment, the suspicion that I was not sincere in my profession of Christianity, but was, rather, a wolf in sheep's clothing.

When I was directed by my keeper to obtain a tin cup from the Prison kitchen for him, from which he might drink hot water to relieve a

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stomach badly ravaged by indigestion, I knew I was expected to steal. It was contrary to the rules set down by the warden for even a keeper to have in the institution a cup such as he wanted, yet, if I would remain on amicable terms with him I must obey.

Of one thing I was certain—I would not steal! I would go to the kitchen, and take the cup in the presence of the official in charge, and if he asked me what I wanted it for, I would tell him. Within twenty-four hours the keeper had the cup. I had picked it up from a table, with the officer's eyes upon me. He reported the fact to the head keeper, who interrogated me. I told that dignitary the truth. My keeper laughed derisively, and declared I was a sly old beggar.

"It is a pity that this snivelling hypocrite can not be content with his preaching and praying," he said to the head keeper, "and not spoil his piety-game by stealing in Prison. But it's in the blood, and he can't help it. That's why he is a Third Termer!"

That night I was in the Dark Cell, and for three days and two nights thereafter. The name Dark Cell does not adequately describe its horrors. A more fitting appellation would be the Black Cell, or, still better, the Black Hole! Indeed, language is too weak a vehicle, when used to convey what it really was and stood for. This Black Hole completely answered the purpose for which it was created. A legally proved bad man

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was eligible to occupy it, only when discovered to be doubly bad, and being adjudged doubly bad, he was immeasurably punished.

In the Black Hole there was not a glimmer of light by day or by night. Its odor of the grave was stench in the nostrils. Eyes might as well be sightless, for there was naught to see, and ears served no purpose, unless it was to intensify to madness the sounds of the shufflings of the incarcerated one, for there was no vibration coming in from the outer world to give notice that it existed.

The black bread for sustenance, and brackish water for thirst, were there to be discovered more by the true instinct of the animal than by the reasoning of intellect. It was the life subterranean of the mole, plus the power of reasoning, and, co-equally, the intellect of the human, plus the half blind groping of the mole!

Who can say that the mole is not the more fortunate? It is happy, no doubt, in its imperfect seeing, in that it burrows as the price of its existence. Surely man in the Black Hole had descended to the role of the creeping thing. I can not believe that God, in His infinite mercy, lent His hand to the invention of so base a cruelty! It remained for man to enact the barbarous!

I lived in the Black Hole seventy-two hours, but my experience was not like what I have so weakly described, true as it was in regard to

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others. For I had with me the staff of His truth to guide my feet, the illumination of His blessed sacrifice for the lost in sin to banish the darkness, the soft whisperings of His reassuring voice to speak to my soul, and faith in the fulfilment of His glorious promise, that He would be with me always, even unto the end.

CHAPTER IV.

TRIUMPH OVER DISAPPOINTMENT.

It was on a Monday morning that the Black Hole delivered me to the world—my Prison world—again. That marvellous human telegraph which is extant among Convicts soon gave me a full understanding of what had occurred during my isolation.

“Samuel Hopkins Hadley talked to the prisoners in the chapel yesterday,” said my informant, and there fell upon me a heaviness that wore into my soul. Of all human beings I most desired to see and hear, Samuel Hopkins Hadley was the one. He was the instrument that God had employed to reach down in the depths of the pit and lift me to a realization of the saving grace of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

I wanted to hear him utter some of the messages from the Master he served, in his gruff, bluff, convincing style, that appealed to one steeped in vice with a power that was more effective than much of the polished eloquence heard in the pulpit. I wanted to grasp his hand and say, in the fulness of my heart, how grateful I was for the help he had been to me.

While I was in temporary exile, he had talked to the prisoners. No doubt he had repeated the story of his life, boldly confessing to half of it

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being spent in professional gambling, drunkenness, debauchery, and crime, often a companion of these. I imagined that he must have spoken in this vein, for he had done so on a Sunday two years prior, when I was an inmate of Sing Sing, and nearing the completion of my second term there. On that occasion, his words had pierced my heart, with an arrow that stood quivering in the wound.

He painted a masterful picture of his life. He had been a drunkard, and I was, too, when freed from Prison restraint. God had reformed him, while I, even as he spoke, was yearning for liquor to quench a thirst that years of indulgence had made well-nigh perpetual. He had gambled for a livelihood. So had I. I had been the proprietor of one of the most elaborate of New York's gilded hells, and from which I had started many a bright young man on the sure road to eternal damnation.

Samuel H. Hadley, I remembered, laid bare his wicked life before his Convict auditors. He did not fail to tell them of his guilt as a thief, forger, and liar. With what rapt attention I drank in his words only God knew, and with what suddenly awakened anguish I realized the blackness of my sin-infected soul, it makes me shudder to recall.

If Mr. Hadley believed himself to have been vile, what, then, was my condition? Shadowy as his record was, it shone in immaculate whiteness compared with mine! I had robbed banks, cor-

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rupting young bank clerks to do it, encouraged police officials in crime, insuring my freedom through the money I paid them, and, more awful than all of these, I had imputed to me the horrible characterization of having posed as a pure, noble-minded man in a church pew, that I might better pursue the calling of a successful thief.

I was regarded as a living example of "Good and Evil"—the Good a cloak for the Evil!

And Mr. Hadley told of the loyalty of his wife, until, at length, his debauchery drove her in sorrow from him. So I had been loved by a woman—one better, sweeter, and more companionable never having breathed the breath of life! Shall I ever forget the agony that came in her eyes, and blanched her cheeks, upon learning of my true character? But she clung to me as the vine clings to the old oak, and would not lose hope of my ultimate reformation, until, at last, weighted with sorrow and disappointment over a broken idol, she faded away and passed on to her heavenly reward!

How abhorrent to her pure soul my black life must have been, I now know. Tottering on the brink of the grave, I have come to realize how her spirit was crushed at the outset, how her tender, wifely love was put to the test! If weeping tears of blood could eradicate these memories, how gladly would my eyes do such a penance. My soul, groveling in the dust of repentance, even as I write, cries out in agony:

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“How infinite must be the compassion of Almighty God, that it will cover my sins with a mantle of charity!”

And when Mr. Hadley had sinned almost beyond redemption, God’s boundless mercy stepped in and showed him the only way in which he could escape from an eternity of well-earned punishment. His words must have sunk as deeply into the hearts of other Convicts, as they did into mine, for I was not alone, when, after the service, I eagerly sought him in the warden’s office, and felt his strong hand-clasp.

“I thank you for your words, Mr. Hadley!” I said hesitatingly, tears gathering in my eyes.

“The thief on the cross, breathing his last, brother, cried out for salvation, and our Lord Jesus interceded for him, and the dying one was saved! So will he intercede for us to-day if we ask Him in simple faith!”

“The thief on the cross, and you in your sins, were holy compared with my shameless life,” I said, in a voice that toned faintly in my own ears. I was afraid he had not heard me.

“Christ’s precious blood was shed freely, that the whole world might be saved from sin,” said Mr. Hadley, and, continuing, “that same blood was shed for you, my brother! Can you believe it?”

“I am going to try,” I said.

“When do you leave here?” he asked.

“In two months.”

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"As soon as that?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, my brother," he said, shaking my hand heartily, "will you promise to call on me at the McAuley Mission in Water Street, New York, as soon as you are free?"

I said I would, and it was useless to conceal the tears that forced themselves in my eyes. One fell on the back of his hand clasping mine.

"God's Holy Spirit is striving with you now, my brother," he said fervently, "so don't grieve It by sending It away. Pray, pray for help, my brother in sin—and now farewell till we meet again—at the Mission!"

And this ended my first interview in 1899 with Samuel H. Hadley.

True to my promise I went to the Mission, at the Water Street address, and was accorded a warm reception. Two months had done much to harden the softening influence of his talk in the Prison. His warnings had ceased to ring in my ears, and I had again resumed my close companionship with that subtle of all deceivers—rum.

Mr. Hadley was a keen observer, and he no doubt saw the evidence of liquor's reascendency over me, if indeed he didn't realize that the reason for keeping my promise to call on him was to seek pecuniary aid to supply me with whiskey and food, rather than to look after the welfare of my soul.

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He startled me in a most abrupt manner. His quick perception of my condition truly demonstrated that he was a man possessed of a more than ordinary power of observation.

“Why don’t you take a tumble to yourself?” he asked in a stern appreciation of the valuable time I was losing in making peace with God. What could I say but mumble unintelligible words, the meaning of which was as vague to him as it was to me? He saw my plight, and, I think, pitied me.

“Come and sit here, Mr. White!” he said. He motioned to a place on a sofa in his office. I sat on it clumsily, while he drew up his arm chair and seated himself directly in front of me.

“I’m not going to lecture you on the past,” he said, “so don’t arm yourself for a defense on that score. Also, consider me a friend, no matter what happens to you and me!”

I felt a lump rising in my throat. This was a man so utterly different from any other I had ever met in missionary work. He went on:

“I speak to you as one who knows what it is to be shipwrecked in a vast sea of sin, without chart or compass, and then to have the Great Captain of us all come along on the good ship Salvation, and throw me a line. This Great Captain said to me, ‘Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, for he will abundantly pardon.’ And instantly I was in

prayer. I asked Him if that message was meant for the thief and the drunkard. In the still, small, but unfailing voice, there came to me a something that pointed out the dying thief on the cross. My brother, I took courage and grasped the rope of eternal salvation and was pulled on board! Soon I learned that the ship's chart to guide me was an abiding faith in Jesus, and that the compass was found in a fervent uplifting of the heart in prayer to God."

"But I can't pray, Mr. Hadley," I said. "Once I knew how, but now I can't! I am ashamed to offer Him in repentance this fragment of life I have left!"

"The thief on the cross was wiser than you, Mr. White," said this good man.

"Oh, but I was better taught in youth than he, perhaps!" I argued, a feeling of opposition possessing me.

"Don't be a fool—don't dissemble!" he cried. "Christ died to save both you and me! Do you doubt His word? Can't you feel it is so?"

I was tempted of the devil, it seemed, for I said, "It's easy to be a Christian, Mr. Hadley, when the sailing is smooth. You have comforts here—you want nothing—you are not beset with sin, while I am, even now, besieged by the torments of an appetite for drink that I can't control, and that must be satisfied or I believe I will go mad! I am hungry for food, too, and my raiment is this!" and I showed him my clothing, which too

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plainly bore the label of the recently discharged Convict.

"I will feed and clothe you, man!" he said, ignoring my reference to a desire for drink. "Drive those things from your mind, my dear fellow!" he cried aloud. "It is your soul I want for Jesus! In the name of God, can't you see how I am troubled over you? Can't you realize what a reformed thief and drunkard is saying to you?"

"Yes, yes, I know, Mr. Hadley—forgive me—don't think I am ungrateful, for I'm not—only—only, I am so—so—"

"Remember, man, my brother!" he exclaimed, at the top of his musical voice, then full of sobs, "that some day you will have to stand face to face with the Lord Jesus Christ! Do you know that? What will you say and do then? Will you plead for food to fill your stomach? Will you call for whiskey to satiate that damnable thirst? What will you do then—in God's name, I say to you now, what will you say when you come face to face with Jesus Christ, who gave His blood to save you, vile as you are?"

I forgot my appetites, forgot I was hungry—everything for the moment was swallowed up in the sudden knowledge of this man's earnestness for my soul's salvation.

In an instant he was standing in front of me, trembling in every fibre of his body, his crippled limb forgotten in the compassion of his wrought-up soul. Then he fell to one knee, and we were

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face to face, I yet sitting on the sofa, not having changed my posture. I saw that he was in agony—the tears were coursing down his cheeks—tears that were being shed for me!

“Down on your knees—right here!” sobbed Mr. Hadley. “Right here—beside me! God is speaking to you this minute! Can’t you hear his voice, my dear brother?”

He caught me about the shoulders, and pulled me to my knees, and we were together beside the sofa.

“Pray! pray! my brother in sin!” he urged brokenly. “You can’t pray twice in dead earnest without having faith born in you! I never knew it to fail! ’Twill be an evidence of God’s spirit working in you!”

I was choking with emotion—was possessed of a new sensation—but I seemed to feel that I was not in the mind Mr. Hadley expected me to be. Nevertheless, I was shaking with a chill as of approaching death.

“I want to pray, but I can’t!” I said in a voice that was almost smothered with sobs.

“You can—you must pray! Say this, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner!’”

“God be merciful to me a sinner!” I said obediently.

“God be merciful to me a sinner!” repeated Mr. Hadley so weakly that I could scarcely catch his words.

“God be merciful to me a sinner!” I said after

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him. I felt as though I had done something right, but I was not in the realm where this godly man was.

I was on my knees in his office, and trying to pray as he bade me to. With him, how different. He was not beside me—I realized that. The body, the clay, was there in the little office, but Hadley, the man of God, was elsewhere! Shall I say that his spirit was at the feet of his God whom he adored, pleading for me? Ah, it must have been so! How he prayed!

“Oh, God, I pray Thee take this man’s sins away, and give him a clean heart! Help him to know how to believe—make him to have a realizing sense of his utter hopelessness in sin, and how anxious Thou art to save him from everlasting damnation! Oh Christ, hear Thou my prayer for his deliverance!”

His words died away in an agony of supplication, after which he rested heavily on the sofa, as though physically exhausted. I remained on my knees for, perhaps, five minutes. Meanwhile he did not stir. Then he rose with much effort, and, standing, put his right hand in mine. I stood up beside him. He pressed my hand and smiled wearily. For an instant it seemed as if I was being greeted by one who had been on a long journey and just returned.

“How do you feel, Mr. White?” he asked me.

“I don’t know!”



The Chair and the Sofa in the Mission Room where Mr. White had
the Memorable Meeting with S. H. Hadley—Supt. Wyburn
observed Talking to the Author

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“Don’t you feel that your soul has been saved?” he inquired simply.

I shook my head negatively, but the act only indicated the uncertainty I felt.

“But you will be saved!” he said with a positiveness that I regarded in wonderment. “I feel—I know that my prayer will be answered! Won’t you try to pray for yourself from now on? Oh, the religion of Jesus Christ is wonderful, for it passeth all temporal understanding!”

I bowed my head.

“You are resolved to turn over a new leaf, Mr. White—of that I am sure!” He declared this, as one having a complete understanding.

“With God’s help, Mr. Hadley—and will you pray for me—always?”

“Until the blessed Saviour calls me home, and if it is possible that I can approach the throne of grace there, and you need my feeble prayers, I won’t forget!”

Was it possible that this reformed drunkard and transgressor of the laws of God and man was so close to the Saviour that he heard the summons that was soon to come:

“Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!”

I was hungry when I went to the Mission and he fed me, penniless and he put money in my pockets, desperate and he encouraged me, without hope of a better life, and he pointed out the way I should go.

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"You don't feel that you have been saved, Mr. White?" Mr. Hadley asked, as he gave me a parting shake of the hand.

"I'm afraid not, Mr. Hadley," I replied, "but I am going to pray, and pray hard, and somehow I feel there is hope for me! But, Mr. Hadley, I am an awful sinner!"

"Come here every day!" he said. "There will be none more welcome than you, whether you are saved or unsaved!"

Deep in my heart I resolved to give a good account of myself to him, even though I failed to experience that change of heart which seemed to uplift him to a world of which I was not a part. As I walked away, these, his words, rang in my ears:

"Remember, man, remember, my brother, that some day you will have to stand face to face with Jesus Christ!"

That memorable visit which was destined to figure prominently in my after experience, was followed by many others. Whenever I saw Mr. Hadley—which was often—he was always the same earnest seeker after my temporal and spiritual welfare, but there came a day when the tempter found me disarmed—not armed and fortified with that saving power, that breastwork of Divine creation, which defies all the great batteries which Satan and his cohorts in sin can array to possess a saved soul.

I had been trying to be a Christian, bulwarked

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by a will to be somebody, and to do something. Perhaps I may call it a determination to reform my old habits, and become a good citizen, and in accomplishing these things, show Mr. Hadley, with pride, what I could do. When the crucial test came, how weak was the mortal to withstand it. I had not found the Saving Grace which would have enabled me to cry out in derision:

“Get thee behind me, Satan!”

And so the demon rum got me in its toils again, and down I went before it. I had pulled myself together, found employment that brought me in revenue honestly acquired, and was in a fair way to win the full confidence of those who trusted me, despite the past, when the crash came. Before it self-pride went crumbling to destruction, swiftly as the dust flies from the teeth of the hurricane.

The few dollars I had garnered melted in drink at the end of a week, and there was nothing left to satisfy a craving for rum that seemed to be intensified ten thousand times over what I had ever known. The thirst I had, and that which would satiate it I must have, therefore the inevitable followed. I stooped, I, the bank burglar who had stolen millions, stooped to mean, petty forgeries! But I got what I madly craved for! It must be mine—rum, rum, rum!

When the revenue from the first forgery was exhausted, still I must have rum, and I forged

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again. Then came the penalty—discovery, pursuit, arrest, and the Cell in the Twenty-second Precinct Police Station, New York, and there, in that Cell, Mr. Hadley's warning was awakened in my soul by the words of a vile, profane, debauched woman. And he had said:

“Remember, man, remember, my brother, that some day you will have to stand face to face with Jesus Christ!”

No, I will not permit it to go on the final record that these words from the lips of this godly man were repeated to me by mere chance. That I will never believe. On the contrary, I have an abiding faith that the woman was an instrument in God's plan for the salvation of my soul, and that I became a Christian in answer to Mr. Hadley's prayer.

And so I went on to pay the penalty for defrauding my fellow-man—that I might quench my thirst for rum.

With Mr. Hadley figuring so largely in my conversion, is it small wonder that I was sorely grieved, after emerging from a three days' sojourn in the Black Hole of Sing Sing, to find I had been cheated of an opportunity to see him and tell him that his prayers had been answered?

Of a truth I wept that night as a child might, whose dearest wish had been denied it. And then I prayed for strength to overcome the longing to gratify self-pride, and for help to bear with fortitude all disappointments, small or great, knowing

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that my Master's ways, though unaccountable to the human mind, are none the less unerring.

Thereafter I had no distress on this score. Though I was not permitted to see Mr. Hadley again while I was in Prison, I was amply repaid, not many days hence, in the receipt of a beautiful letter from him, in which he anxiously inquired after my health spiritually and physically.

The next day, through Chaplain Sanderson, I obtained writing material, and the same night I penned Mr. Hadley a long reply. And undoubtedly he had mingled feelings of regret and joy in reading the letter, for I made no concealment of what had happened to me, from the day we last met, until my conversion in the Police Station. Also, I told him I had not sent for him to visit me in the Station House, because I desired time in which to prove myself in the faith. I carefully withheld any reference to the unpleasantness which fell to my lot as a member of the Third Termers.

"I am bearing the cross with the help of God, Mr. Hadley," I wrote him in conclusion, "and the way is bright! I have been freed forever from the bondage of sin, and through the aid of the same Divine Power I am now serving my last term in a Prison. The remainder of my poor old life will be devoted to the service of our blessed Lord!"

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CHAPTER V.

IN THE LIGHT PATCH.

The subsequent days I spent in Sing Sing were often duplicates of the one on which Convict Tom Baker was hastened to his death.

I think it was shortly before Christmas that I underwent a trial which sorely drew upon my will, and exercised my faith. It was after I had spent a terrible day of labor in the railroad yard. The weather was in the state when slush was next to a hair's breadth of freezing, and shoes that were whole amounted to nothing as guards from three inches of snow-water, in which the Third Termers had been obliged to tramp. As the soles of my shoes were worn through to the stockings, I had walked in this slush from early in the morning until supper time, without an opportunity to make a change.

Cold, wet, fagged to a thread, my determined spirit exceedingly tried, with an almost unshakable sensation of depression, I half dragged my body to the Cell, and dropped on the cot before the turnkey had time to shoot the bolts in the door.

The blood was roaring in my head under a painful, feverish pressure, but otherwise I was chilled to the marrow, and shook with distressing violence. I lay there in this manner for several

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minutes, with my eyes closed, hoping thereby to get a renewal of energy.

Presently my nostrils sensed an odor that increased in pungency every moment, until the truth dawned upon my tardy brain with an abruptness amounting to a shock. It set my head in an increased whirl, and brought forward, with a mighty rush, a temptation that I believed could never be potent again to disarm me.

Whence had come the fumes of whiskey?

My cold extremities began to take on warmth with each inhalation. I opened my eyes curiously, but found the cell dark save for a small patch of brownish-yellow light, which came from a lamp in the corridor, and fell, diagonally, on the stone flooring in the corner just opposite my cot.

In the illuminated space sat an uncorked, flat bottle!

It was two-thirds full of an amber liquid!

Was it the devil's own subtlety that suggested the thought which at once captured me? A voice seemed to speak in sympathy. I could not explain the why and wherefore of it.

"Here you are," said the voice, "a poor, weak, chilled, old man, whom death is courting, and God, in His wisdom and mercy, has produced that which will provide warmth for your blood, renew your strength, and, best of all, save your life!"

I marvelled at this, and though not attempting to rise from the cot, kept my eyes fastened to

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the object that appeared to be there so supernaturally.

“God has sent it to you in a needed hour,” was the persuasive interpretation of my thoughts. “You are direfully ill and about to die, but this will make you strong for the work God has saved you to do! God’s ways, in providing for his children of the faith, are indeed devious, and often wonderful! See, you are almost felled with the hardships imposed on you by those who have no regard for the youth, or pity for the aged or infirm! Here, right before you, is an elixir when most needed!”

“What is in the bottle?” I said half aloud, but, nevertheless, I had no doubt of its nature, for its fragrance—always to me fragrance—was unmistakable, and answered the query. Had God sent me this means of relief from the awful state I was in, or, were these meditations only creatures of the devil, working in a disordered and weary brain?

I struggled up excitedly from the cot, and staggered to the corner. Had I been strong, the light spot would have been in reaching distance of the cot. In an upright position my figure cast a shadow in the corner, and the patch of light was obscured. Was it that my brain had really fallen ill, and that this was one of its tantalizing vagaries?

I swung myself sidewise out of the range of light so that it shone uninterrupted in the Cell



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again. No! I had not been laboring under a delusion! Lunging forward I caught up the bottle, and hysterically and swiftly placed its neck to my lips.

But I did not drink from it!

A power unseen, but strangely felt, stayed me! Instead I set it down, and felt for the cork, which in all probability was on the floor. I found it, tight-corked the bottle, and stepped unsteadily back to the cot.

Victory, Victory!

"What a tiny victory was won!" I fancy someone will say, anent this rehearsal of an evil hour's experience in a Prison Cell.

It may be, indeed, that a sneer will curl the lips of the one unacquainted with the habits of an habitual drunkard. To me it was an hour of awful moment—of terrible import! I realized it then, and its force is with me even to this day. It was a triumph to me of so great a degree, that I have defied criticism to tell of it, that those of my fellow-men, cursed with a lurking appetite for strong drink, may find comfort in these words, and, perhaps, sympathize with me.

For hours I was there alone, while all about me was silence, save for the occasional steppings of the night guard, who, at intervals, shuffled along the corridor in his soft shoes of felt. It is needless to say that I prayed long and earnestly, and that a calmness overtook me, restfulness supplanted agitation, warmth drove away the chill

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in my blood, and the strength of a strong man superseded the weakling.

When I awoke after three hours of sleep it was time to begin the preliminaries of another day's work, but I was rejuvenated, both in soul and body.

The bottle of whiskey lay under the cot where I put it, though the mystery of its presence in my Cell, and what purpose it was to serve, were still unsolved. I left it in the corner of the Cell, on going to work, but, as I expected, it was gone when I returned at night. The hand that put it there, had, undoubtedly, taken it away.

A week later the secret was revealed. "The Kid," a mischievous First Termer who occupied the Cell adjoining mine, and from which Tom Baker had gone forever, was its author. The news came to me through "Little Pete," a friendly Third Termer who worked in my gang.

"'The Kid' heard of yo'r relig'us turn, an' that y'u'd been a boozier," said the latter, "an' he put up the job."

"It's strange he'd risk parting with whiskey when it's so hard to smuggle inside the walls!" I remarked wonderingly.

"It was pizen!" explained "Little Pete," with a grin. "He stole a bit of wood alcohol from the Paint shop, an' dashed it with some whiskey. 'Lookin'-glass' Charley, our keeper, give him to make it have the color an' the smell!"

"I didn't drink the stuff," I said.

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"The Kid" bobbed his head and grinned.

"No, y'u didn't! That's what's hurtin' 'Lookin'-glass' Charley! I guess he got 'The Kid' to put up th' job on ye! Looks like it."

"I shall never let liquor pass my lips again, Pete. It nearly cost me my soul," I replied resolutely.

"Ef y'ud drinked th' stuff y'u'd lost y'ur life, or I'm an innocent guy from Suckerville! Don't say I told y'u, George!"

And thus was explained the thing that led me to give momentary consideration to temptation. But even the effort of those who would do me harm without a good reason, was turned to my profit. Thereafter I was the better armed to withstand the snares of the tempter that were ever set along my path, ready to catch me in an unwary moment. And so it was wood alcohol over which I had nearly stumbled! Well, I had seen the time when I would have risked even that poison to quench the thirst of a whiskey-abused throat.

"God give me a faith that is as immovable as the Rock of Ages," was my daily prayer. "Help me to breast the onslaught of evil! If it combat me, warily, within these Prison walls, how much greater will be the need of Thee out in the world, where temptations are innumerable, and a thousand fold more alluring."

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CHAPTER VI.

ON TO THE PORT OF DESPAIR.

Toward the latter part of February, an incident which set the officials by the ears for fifteen minutes, had the Prison yard for its scene. Three of the Third Termers on railroad duty made an exciting dash for liberty! The guards were taken completely by surprise.

I was in the secret, having been informed within an hour prior to the execution of the plan of escape. I would not have known of it, but for the fact of being on the same task with them, and their uncertainty as to what I would do in the emergency. Probably they reasoned out a greater possibility of success if I were afforded an opportunity to join them. Whatever the motive was, they took me in their entire confidence.

“The next freight train is due here in half an hour!” explained one of the would-be escapers, mentioning the exact time, which I do not now recall, “and we’re goin’ to make a break for it when the train pulls out for New York! Will you come along? We’ll ride a short distance, and then take to the fields or woods!”

I declined.

“Well—you’ll squeal on us, then?” he asked, snappishly.

“I shall remain neutral,” I assured them, “but

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if I were in the place of either of you, I'd stick till the front door opened, and let me out legally."

"The gates won't let me out for thirty years, on that kind of schedule, an' then it 'll be in a hemlock box," growled the Convict who appeared to be the ringleader.

"And for me, fifteen!" said the second.

"Twelve for mine!" declared the third.

"And this place, with its grafters and brutes, is more of a hell than I care for!" said the thirty-year man. "A bullet in the back 'll be pleasant medicine t' stayin' here!"

"Better come with us," he added.

"No," was my decision. "I'm guilty, and that's why I'm here—I'm paying the penalty!"

"You don't think the judge knew he was sending you t' hell, do y'u?" was the quick interrogation from the fifteen-year man, who seemed to be desperate enough for any purpose.

"Things are awfully bad, but I'm going to stay!" I replied in a tone in which there was not a scintilla of doubt.

"Somethin' tells me you won't squeal!" the longest-term prisoner said finally.

"That something tells you the truth, for I shall be looking in another direction!"

"Thanks f'r bein' square!" said the thirty-year man, roughly.

"You can't make it," was my parting warning, "and then things will be worse." I couldn't find it in my heart to stand in the way of these men.

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Our keeper was loitering under a shed some distance away, safely housed from the winter weather, so I walked away from the desperate prisoners to another car, and resumed my task of shovelling snow. There was a box car between us. I saw to it that this was so.

Ten minutes later a long freight train, hauled by two powerful engines, drew up to, and in front of the Prison, where it halted with a great hissing of steam and clatter of frosty steel and iron. Not long afterward the puffing of the big locomotives told me the train was in motion again, and on its way out of Ossining. I continued to work my shovel briskly, meanwhile waiting for the inevitable. It came directly with shouts and accompanying reports from discharged firearms. Also I heard the clanging of the alarm bells in the Prison inclosure, signifying that the head officials were cognizant of what was going on.

The jangle of the departing trains was decreasing in volume, and now and then I heard shots. Meanwhile I worked and wondered what had happened to the fugitives. Had they really gotten away? I did not think it possible. At this juncture I heard the sharp blast of an engine whistle. I knew from my railroad experience that it meant down-brakes. One of the engineers of the train had been informed of what was afoot. This, to me, was a fair indication of the failure of the escapers' dash for liberty.

When other shots were heard, a moment later,

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there was no doubt of it in my mind. About this time a guard rushed me out of the railroad yard, and within the Prison walls. Other Convicts of the Third Termer contingent, were similarly served. As for myself, I was more than satisfied to get in out of the cold, and no doubt my comrades were no less pleased.

Before reaching the seclusion of my Cell, the would-be escapers were brought in and placed in solitary confinement. So their plan for freedom had been hopeless from the beginning.

In the first place, they had not bribed any of the officials, therefore their chance of success was not one in a hundred. I can not prove it, but I make bold to say, that in every case where a Convict successfully escaped from Sing Sing, he was abetted in his plans by an official. That much for what I think of the security of Sing Sing, if those in command are faithful to the State.

The incident of the Third Termers' attempt to rid themselves of Prison environment, carried me back to my first term in Sing Sing. Once more I compared the George White of that period, with the George White of the later day, supported by a strong faith in the power of God to change the heart of a reckless sinner. When the opportunity came then to evade serving the sentence rightfully imposed, how eager I was to avail myself of it. Indeed, I knew what it was to dash for liberty by hiding myself in a canal boat moored at the Prison side of the river for the purpose. And,

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after that desperate attempt resulted in failure, I knew what it was to ride out of the Prison yard in my own carriage, which was rendered available through a subtle plan that, perhaps, has never been equalled. Failure was not recorded in the Prison books on that occasion.

But a great transformation had come over me. I was no longer desperate and yearning for an opportunity to escape from the penalty of my own wrong-doing. I had sinned, and, my sins finding me out, I was paying the penalty. But for my conversion, the offer of the Third Termers to join them, however hopeless the plan appeared, would have been accepted, and regarded as a reckless chance which might be taken as a means of defeating justice! It was with extreme satisfaction and heart-sincere gratitude to an all-wise Providence, therefore, that, "I lay me down to sleep," in my Cell that night.

The following morning dawned with a clear sky and a decided change in the temperature. The harsh northwesterly winds which had blown strongly and steadily for upwards of four days had shifted to the south during the night. Though there was a perceptible dampness in the atmosphere, it held a degree of warmth in it that was most acceptable, and, altogether, I began a day with a more comfortable feeling than I had known since the beginning of my incarceration. It closed with a happening which filled me with dismay!

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A batch of Third Termers had been ordered to prepare for removal to Clinton Prison at Dannemora, N. Y., the next day, and I was of the number. Despite my faith that all would be for the best, I went to bed feeling keenly apprehensive of what the morrow would bring forward. I was worried, and felt spiritually weaker than I deemed it possible for me ever to be again. Most earnestly I prayed for a stanch heart with which to bravely meet any evil which might beset me.

I trust that those who read these lines will refrain from thinking me vacillating between faith and distrust. And, in justice to myself, I wish to protest against this in the fullest sense. As a matter of fact I do not believe it is within the province of the normal, human being, unacquainted with "time service" in Clinton Prison, to pass judgment upon the expressions of a Convict who has been there, and endured the consequent hardships.

Among Convicts, Clinton Prison was spoken of in horror, as the Port of Despair, through whose dark channel of approach one voyaged only to leave behind all signs of hope. Consignment to Sing Sing was held as ignominy intensified, from the view-point of a Third Termer, but to dwell in Clinton, as a "transfer," personified if you please, was to be heaped with a superlative degree of amalgamated sorrow, shame and degradation!

To a Convict in either Sing Sing or Auburn, the mention of Clinton was synonymous with

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hope buried in a Wilderness of Despair, from which there was no chance of resurrection. Reform, in the same thought-cycle with Clinton, was too remote for contemplation, since it was regarded as among the events non-existent there.

To the hardened criminal, Clinton was a scourge whose welts sank into his soul, so to speak, and rendered him a more bitter and dangerous enemy of society than ever. Clinton Prison existed as moulded iron, a die that indelibly stamped the soul of a Convict with the brand of "felon eternal," from whose bourne none hope to return.

To the criminal who became such through misfortune rather than by premeditation, Clinton was the doleful bell that tolled the death-knell of better and higher things. Its tones suggested the Tomb of Shattered Ideals. Not in one, single vibration was there heard music pitched to the key of salvation for the immortal soul through the Blood shed on the cross! Of a truth, there was nothing in Clinton to indicate that a soul existed in the clay of a Convict. No, no, no, no! Clinton, with its lean, elongated fingers, beckoned to all a promise of fellowship of lost souls, harvested as Satan's playthings in an eternity of wailing and gnashing of teeth!

The blessed words of Almighty God, as accepted there, were at best, but a feeble pretense, and in reality an open delusion, while prayer was an empty vessel, from which imps merrily quaffed

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and shouted in ribaldry over the chaos of immortal souls! Hypocrisy was rampant, sin stalked in a thin robe of innocence, and the only god that really reigned there was Mammon, whose sway was imperial through the magic sceptre of gold.

This word-picture of Clinton had been drawn for me by one whose veracity I accepted without question. Thus vividly enlightened, is it remarkable that I regarded my removal to that Port of Despair with affright? In the light of subsequent acquaintance with material things there, I fully realized what absolute terror would have been my portion, but for the grace of God which sustained me, and in due season, taught me to be unafraid.

The weeks I was in Sing Sing, as I have already said, developed one true friend in the person of Chaplain Sanderson.. He had precious little influence there, to be sure, being a good man, and, unfortunately, this was so, for a reason that was proverbial. No really good man has unlimited influence in spiritual affairs in a political camp. But Chaplain Sanderson did the best he could, and was, in consequence, a spiritual aid to me, who sought no favors of a material kind, nor expected any. He was aware of my intense desire to pay the penalty in full, and often I found great cheer and encouragement in his comforting words.

I saw him in the reception room the next day, not long prior to the departure of our gang.

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"Keep up the good fight!" he said, as a farewell, "and remember, you can't lose with God on your side!"

The Chaplain if he knew did not say why I was selected for transfer to Clinton, nor did I ask him. I only hoped that what seemed to forecast the worst for me, would ultimately turn out to be the best. At any rate I was determined to intrench myself in the faith, trusting that it might be the latter.

Handcuffed and chained to a comrade I passed out of the ominous portals of Sing Sing, never to enter them again. A reverse thought did dwell with me for a moment, and I wondered if the "Never to enter them again," might only mean as a criminal. Might it not be my glorious privilege to return some day with a word of hope for these men, tossing in troubled waters without an anchor of faith cast to windward, sufficient to weather them through the breakers of sin?

Perhaps not, but who, aside from God, could know?

CHAPTER VII.

THE GRAFTING CHAPLAIN.

It was before noon when Clinton Prison loomed up dark and forbidding on our horizon. An involuntary shudder went through me, however much I had steeled myself against what I knew must come.

"Well, we 're in for it," commented the Convict at my side.

"And must make the very best of it," I said, inadvertently picking up his train of thought.

"The best of it!" he replied, contemptuously. "It 's the worst of it. Say, White—I never expect to be nearer hell than that place—that is it—hell!"

"You speak so positively," I remarked, half suspecting what he would next say.

"You 've seen pictures of the devil, and so imagine about what his Satanic Majesty looks like!" stated my companion. "Now I don't have to imagine Clinton is a hell, for I know it—I've been there!"

I had not known it, and in reality I was in no mood to talk. And, I was not accepting the situation as calmly, and heroically, as I had planned.

"I've never had a good thought since I got out of the place," he continued, "for they made a devil of me! I feel that I'll kill some one before I get out of it!"

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I said nothing. It was easy to see that he was in no mood to tolerate curses or kindnesses. Besides, I was gloomy enough and found no consolation in his belligerency. Not long after this we were inside the Prison gate. As my record had preceded me there I felt I was a marked man, and need expect no mercy. Perhaps this sensation was the means of driving me yet closer to the Divine Protector. Be that as it may, I went to sleep on my hard bed soon after night-fall, with an earnest prayer for moral and physical strength to stand the storm.

The following morning I turned out to a task of odds and ends about the Prison and yard. During the day I saw a man in civilian attire pass through the Prison inclosure and enter one of the shops. His pompous air at once captured my attention. In the bosom of his white shirt front, a diamond solitaire gleamed magnificently and my thoughts placed him among the Prison officials. That he was not the warden I knew, but that he might be an assistant who was excused from wearing the uniform, seemed to be within reason. I asked a Convict who had been in Clinton for two or more years to gratify my curiosity.

“That’s the dominie,” he asserted.

“The dominie? Do you mean the Prison Chaplain?” I inquired in amazement.

“He’s the guy—don’t be surprised!” said my informant.

“But—that big diamond!” I exclaimed.

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"Don't you mind him—he's queer! You'll see and hear stranger things than that, if you stay long enough!"

I could scarcely believe my eyes and ears. So this man, who had the air of a gross politician more than of a minister of the Gospel, was Chaplain J. E. Metcalf, the counsellor to whom a Convict of Clinton must go, should he want spiritual guidance.

Will it cast a reflection upon my faith in God's promises, if I admit that I was beset with a feeling of heaviness? I had so fondly hoped to find a devout Chaplain in Clinton, who would lend me a helping hand over rough places. Now, I could not harmonize my ideal with the coarse, be-jewelled fellow who had just passed before my eyes. But my knowledge of Clinton's Chaplain was not to end yet.

"It will be a duty well performed," said a Christian man with whom I discussed this Chaplain in after days, "if you make known to the public, somewhat of the scandalous under-current of Clinton Prison. Tremendous efforts have been put forth by godly men and women, of late years, to reform Convicts in Clinton," he added, "but how can such Christian influences be efficacious among the men, when we have 'whited sepulchres' in the Prison's corps of officials, to minimize every bit of good attempted?"

"Why," he continued, warming up hugely with righteous indignation, "take Chaplain Metcalf,

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for instance! His comings and goings were common gossip, and a scandal among the very men we would rescue from the devil's trap of sin. He was sent there as a protege of a former Prison superintendent. To my certain knowledge he did not go among the prisoners, and, it is a lamentable fact, that pathetic, appealing letters from Convicts seriously ill in the hospital, and desirous of spiritual encouragement, were brutally ignored by him. Why he thus betrayed the injunctions of the Lord to minister to the spiritually sick, I am unable to surmise. I only know that his neglect in this regard was an open scandal among the Convicts. More than one curled his lip in scorn, and pointed out this man as a fine exponent of religious teachings!"

He paused a moment.

"It grieves me sorely to say it," this Christian gentleman proceeded, "but something ought to be done quickly, and with as little injury to the cause as possible, to remedy such evil conditions. Not that Chaplain Metcalf was not an eloquent preacher. On the contrary, he was a prince in oratory, but, unfortunately, the neglect of his charges, his swagger, his be-diamonded shirt front and his general reputation, lost him the respect of those he was presumed to care for with the solicitude of a good and faithful shepherd of the flock!"

I was not a little impressed by the emphasis with which my friend spoke of the general repu-

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tation of Chaplain Metcalf, and referred to that part of his statement.

"It grieves me to tell of his reprehensible conduct," he continued, "for I can scarcely conceive of a minister of the Gospel being so utterly disregardful of the sanctity of the cloth. His character, as known to the Convicts, was of such extreme worldliness, and so identified with men and women of questionable repute in the city of Plattsburg, a few miles from Dannemora, as to create contempt for religion in the minds of non-professing Christians.

"In Clinton it was optional with the inmates whether or not they attended Divine service. To demonstrate to you the effect of the Chaplain's misconduct on these men, I must tell you, that, whereas there was an attendance of more than nine hundred each Sunday at the beginning of his service there was at the close of it not one quarter of the number! Can you imagine a more terrible rebuke for a minister of the Gospel than that? I certainly can not."

The period with which this recital has to do was prior to, and included the twenty months I was in Clinton. Some time after my release, the scandal attached to Chaplain Metcalf became so much of a stench in the nostrils of officialdom, that it could be no longer tolerated. Relief came, finally, in his transfer to another Prison. Unless I am in error, it was during Chaplain Metcalf's stay in Clinton that his wife died, and within

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a year, he was wedded again, the new wife bringing him a handsome and, no doubt, acceptable fortune.

While I was painfully impressed with the knowledge of the Chaplain's betrayal of his Divine commission, it bore me back to the first term I served in Sing Sing. Rev. Dr. Schoonmaker was the Chaplain then, and, like Chaplain Metcalf, left a bad impression among the Convicts. But he was not guilty, so far as I have been informed, of congregating with unchaste associates. His tendency was irrepressibly toward graft, and the victims of his cupidity, were, naturally, the Convicts of his spiritual flock, many of whom found him out to their financial cost. He had a well-defined price for anything he was asked to do.

At the outset, the favors he obtained for Convicts were of the perfunctory sort, though politically negotiated. While these, in the main, were small, special privileges, they were, almost invariably, violations of Prison regulations, and decidedly should not have been trafficked in by any one, least of all a clergyman! However, in the beginning the Convicts did not regard his purchased aid with any particular disapproval. As time progressed, his eagerness to acquire gold through this channel, outgrew all bounds of what they termed decency.

Eventually the Chaplain's appetite for graft became voracious. He would accept it without

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pretense of giving any value in return. I have no doubt, that, in the beginning, he would have resented the imputation that he was doing wrong in any way. But gradually, step by step, he advanced in the sin, until, at the end, he had committed crimes, which, if discovered and acted upon by the authorities, would have landed him in Prison stripes.

As an example of the power of habit, and in the hope of drawing attention to many grave evils existing in Prison management to-day, I will relate the story of one Convict's experience with Chaplain Schoonmaker:

Three hours before a batch of men was to be transferred to Auburn Prison, I met Joe Bain, who was doing a term for a crime committed in New York City, where he lived with his wife and family—a better wife, according to this man, a wicked, misguided husband never had.

"Are you going to be shipped to Auburn?" he asked me in a commiserating tone.

"No, I am happy to say!" I replied. "Are you?"

Joe smiled.

"Thank heaven, no!" he said, with a burst of feeling that told me plainer than words how glad he was. I think he had time only to give vent to this expression of relief, when a messenger hastened up and said something to him in a subdued voice. My friend's face turned white, as he whirled around to the messenger.

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"Good God!" he exclaimed. "It can't be true! I don't believe it!"

"But the order for you is to get ready," said the bad news bearer, as he walked rapidly away. Bain turned to me. I looked in his troubled face for an explanation. It came.

"I'm to go to Auburn," he said. "I can't understand it—there is some mistake."

"You're on the list to go," I said.

"Yes, I know—I was to go, but I fixed it!"

"You gave up money to some one?" I asked.

"Yes—to Chaplain Schoonmaker—Four Hundred Dollars! He wouldn't flimflam me, would he?"

"Certainly not! Look him up! They've simply neglected to erase your name from the transfer list," I told him, adding, "When does the batch start?"

"In less than three hours! What'll I do?"

I advised him to look up the Chaplain.

"Will you help me?" he asked. I was having the freedom of the Prison just then, and felt disposed to assist him out of his predicament. He rushed away, saying he would meet me in the same place in half an hour. I started out for the Chaplain in another direction. We returned as soon as possible. Neither of us could find our man. I was flabbergasted at the result of my hunt, while Bain was in a furious mood.

"The thief! What do you think of him?" he howled, until I cautioned him.

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"It's a hard thing to believe of him," I said, "for a crook would be square in a deal of this kind."

"It's plain he's got my Four Hundred, and I've got to go!" Bain said, grinding his teeth savagely. "But what will poor Mary think? She worked hard to save that money!"

Mary was the malefactor's wife. She kept a small boarding house in New York from which she supported herself and the children. The money that Chaplain Schoonmaker had, she'd saved as a fund to provide her husband with small comforts, which she brought to him as often as the Prison rules would permit. With her husband in Auburn, when could she see him? Auburn Prison was nearly three hundred miles further from New York than Sing Sing.

"I'll get the money back, or kill him!" Bain said to me, just before he left the Prison. Strong man that he was, the tears choked him. And I felt the utmost sympathy for him. He went away to Auburn, where he completed a long term. Circumstances were so ordered that he never met Chaplain Schoonmaker again, nor did he ever see the color of his Four Hundred Dollars.

Upon making an investigation, with a view of ascertaining where Chaplain Schoonmaker was when Bain left Sing Sing, I found he was attending a meeting of an Aid Society conducted in the village of Sing Sing by young women, and that he contributed a few dollars to the cause.

CHAPTER VIII.

PETER JAMES AND OTHERS.

“Fall in—fall in! Ready—quick! March!”

Tramp, tramp, tramp, tramp, tramp, tramp,
tramp, tramp, tramp!

“Halt—lock up!”

In five minutes I was in my Cell, the great key in the lock turned, and the bolt shot home with a snap that was startling. So far as I could then ascertain, what happened to me, came to every other man in the Prison. What was the portent of this precipitate evacuation of shops, and every near and far corner of the Prison yard, I could not fathom. Not a word had fallen from the lips of the keepers, from the principal down, to solve the mystery.

We had only marched from the dinner-room to the various stations where our respective duties called us, when the hasty command came that drove us all Cellward.

I listened intently to catch a word from my adjoining Cellmates, that would throw, even a glimmer of light on a happening that had no equal in my Convict life.

Every man was silent!

For once, the code of communication between Cells was impotent, but for what reason I was not able to guess. My evening meal, as usual, and that of every other prisoner for aught I knew,

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was served in the Cell. When I awoke in the morning the mystery was yet unrevealed. My breakfast was brought to me, and my neighbors were similarly served.

But at noon the leak came, and like a flash, too. My neighbor to the left got it from his end of the wing. It came, being passed from Cell to Cell, by the Convicts' telegraph, in language something like this:

"Four men escaped yesterday! None has been captured!"

That was the message I got, and that was why we had been hurried to our Cells the day before so expeditiously. Beyond the definite information that four of the men in the Tin shop had escaped, nothing further was learned until after we had passed the fourth day in our Cells.

On the morning of the sixth day, the old routine was resumed, and we found ourselves picking up the lines of duty we had so suddenly dropped. There was no attempt on the part of the officials to withhold the sequel to the plan of escape.

"The foxes have been trapped!" was the message that the keepers spread broadcast among the nine hundred inmates.

And, it must be so! There was a lesson for the nine hundred to know, and they should be taught it. The lesson was the complete knowledge of the futility of trying to escape from Clinton Prison. This must be made obvious to all. And here it was—the warning:

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"The bloodhounds ran them down—trapped them at the threshold of death! One was shot!"

"Gone before the Great Judge, unsaved!" I thought with a pang. Subsequently I gained a brief account of the escape from Peter James, who planned it from the beginning to the end, which came in so lamentable a failure.

I have not arrogated to myself the high province of criticising these men. Whether they did right or wrong, is a matter which will have to be settled between them and their Maker. I only know that the disciplinary measures to which Principal Keeper James B. Fulton resorted, upon assuming his office in Clinton, were so unnecessarily drastic, and so inordinately iniquitous, that many of the inmates were driven to desperation. Even this woeful condition would not impel me to yield up this narrative to the world, so impressed was I with the idea that the unrighteous man should pay the price of his misdoings without complaint, were it not for the fact that Peter James was, and is to-day, innocent of the crime of murder, for which he was imprisoned.

James was in a lawless gang bent on theft, and the locality of the operation was in Westchester County, New York. He was strictly opposed to the shedding of blood, and at all times avoided conditions having the slightest tendency in that direction.

It appears that one of the gang was unexpectedly drawn into a trap, and used his revolver

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before James could prevent it, or make his way from the scene. To his dismay and horror, he witnessed the shooting. Afterwards, he was apprehended and charged with murder. Though possessed of a full knowledge of the facts he would not betray his pal, or furnish any information as to the latter's whereabouts.

The outcome of this "honor among thieves" was the conviction of James of murder in the second degree, and, straightway, he began a life sentence.

Principal Keeper Fulton, a native of Napanock, N. Y., came to Clinton, not long prior to the expiration of my term in the fall of 1903. He succeeded Elijah Vogan, who was deposed for being too lenient with the prisoners. In other words, Vogan was truly humane in his treatment of the men, some of whom, no doubt, took advantage of it. When Fulton came he openly boasted of what he would do in the way of maintaining discipline. He strutted about the Prison in a lordly manner. The Convicts said the principal keeper was infected with a microbe which they facetiously labelled "ego." His bearing interpreted anything but dignity. In short, he created for himself the dual characterization of "martinet" and "fool." He was hated and laughed at in a breath. For a slight infraction of a Prison rule that, ordinarily, would invite an addition of three days to the victim's term, he would name a penalty, ranging from sixty to ninety days.

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And now back to Peter James. He was an exemplary prisoner so far as his general conduct was concerned. Through exigencies, of which he was unable to obtain a clear understanding, however, he fell under Fulton's keenest displeasure. Inasmuch as it was impossible to lengthen the incarceration of James, by adding more days for him to serve, many other forms of punishment were inflicted on him. Not infrequently these were exceedingly petty and, in their very nature, exposed the innate meanness of Fulton. Several Convicts in the Tin shop where James was the engineer, and with whom he was on excellent terms, also became special targets at which the principal keeper aimed his battery of persecutions.

The fact that James, an innocent man, was doomed, in all probability, to remain in Prison for the remainder of his life, tended to embitter him not a little. This, plus his trials at the hands of the unprincipled Fulton, could have no other, natural effect, than to force him into a state of desperation. If the two causes specified were insufficient to produce this climax, then all that was needed to bring it about, was Fulton's harsh treatment of James' friends.

At any rate Fulton's oppressive reign had existed but a short time, when James and his cronies decided to make a "break," or rather "dig," or perhaps both, for liberty.

As engineer in the Tin shop he had more or

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less freedom about it. Frequently he was obliged to visit the cellar of the shop for the purpose of tinkering with steam and water pipes there. Three of his pals, two of whom had suffered at the instance of Fulton, were employed in the yard, and often stole away in the cellar for a half hour's rest, or to take a few secret whiffs of tobacco from their pipes.

James decided that it would be a sure route to liberty, if a tunnel were dug from the cellar to the sewer that discharged in a small river not very far from the outside wall of the Prison. So the quartette went to work, and within two weeks had scooped out a tunnel forty-five feet long, through which they would be able to reach the sewer.

All agreed that the underground journey would be extremely hazardous, owing to the irregularity of the "worm hole," as James called it. In digging it, rocks had to be circuited, and other difficulties only partially surmounted. Even at this dangerous stage, the outlet must do, for time was getting precious, and the chances of discovery increased many fold each day. When all was in readiness they started, James heading into the bore first.

"Big Fred," long and beefy, was the fourth one to angle his way through the uncomfortable exit. While he was en route, James and the others crouched along the river bank and waited. About five minutes had been the average time for each

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of the others to make the trip, but, as near as James could reckon, fifteen had passed, and "Big Fred" had not appeared at the mouth of the tunnel. This seemed to indicate extreme danger, and James said he would do a little scouting to see what was amiss with the big fellow. There was "Big Fred," lodged in the tunnel, ten feet from its mouth, like a wad in the bore of a shotgun. James crawled in, and succeeded in drawing him out.

With their Prison uniforms showing wrong side out, and also well smeared with earth, the party separated, and made a dash across the country to a railroad nearby. The plan was to keep within seeing distance of this road, moving parallel with it toward New York City, traveling by night, and sleeping in the day-time except when it was necessary to do cautious foraging.

I don't remember how long they had been gone when the alarm was sounded in the Prison, and we inside, full of mystery, as I have said, were hustled in our Cells. The much-vaunted principal keeper, Fulton, was at first thoroughly panic-stricken. Then, instead of being the calm, forceful leader, he became the hot-headed incompetent his enemies said he was. I would not gainsay the assertion that his lack of initiative in the exigency, was the primary cause of an almost unheard-of activity at Albany.

C. V. Collins was State Superintendent of Prisons then, and on hearing of the quartette's

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escape, put the right kind of energy, backed by brainy direction, in the search for the fugitives. In the first three days, two of them were captured, leaving Peter James and "Big Fred" still at liberty. On the night of the fifth day "Big Fred" was brought in with an ugly bullet wound in one of his legs, but not dead, as we had been led to believe. James was supported in next, fagged out for the want of food. He had put up a desperate fight, and only surrendered when he fell wounded.

I gathered that Superintendent Collins had a soft spot in his heart for a Convict in distress, and so Principal Keeper Fulton must have found out, if his wits were sharp enough. The superintendent looked over James and "Big Fred" for a moment, and then said to Fulton:

"In my opinion these poor wretches have been punished enough!"

The superintendent's opinion proved to be an executive command, for James and "Big Fred" received no added penalty for trying to steal their liberty. Perhaps Superintendent Collins obtained a lot of valuable information about the management of Clinton Prison on that visit, for not long afterward, Principal Keeper Fulton was removed, and Elijah Vogan was reinstated.

Not many months later Fulton was seized with a fatal illness. I have never learned whether or not he died a Christian, but I sincerely hope he made his peace with God!

CHAPTER IX.

ALWAYS TO ME THE "LITTLE MOTHER."

I saw the "Little Mother"—Mrs. Maud Ballington Booth—yesterday.

This affectionate term best describes her, for she is to the infant in Christianity what the mother is to the lisping babe, whose eyes have opened for the first time upon a new and strange habitation.

The "Little Mother" is soothing to the troubled spirit. Her illuminated presence communes in a language that is universal, and to which the ears of all seekers after good, are perfectly attuned. The beauty and purity of her soul, are reflected in her face, as by a flawless mirror. Before her lips sound the words that uplift, confidence has been established in the inquiring one, never to be found wavering. And she is, and ever will be to me, nothing more or nothing less than "Little Mother!"

It was good news forsooth when the announcement was made on Saturday that Mrs. Booth would be in the chapel on Sunday afternoon, and speak to the prisoners. I don't think there was a man with strength enough to walk from his Cell or sick bed in the hospital, who was not ready, and anxious to be in the chapel at the appointed hour. As for myself, I know that no one had a



Mrs. Maud Ballington Booth, the "Little Mother"

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keener desire to be there. Fortunately, I was able to occupy a seat close to the platform, where I could drink in the truths which the "Little Mother" told in her simple but rhythmic words, that flowed with the strength and certainty of a deep, peacefully moving river. I would not correctly interpret her words in characterizing them a sermon. She just talked, and in doing so, said something! When she finished, the most illiterate Convict there knew what had been said, and no questions need be asked.

"The life of a criminal does n't pay—it is a waste of precious time!" said the "Little Mother," and every one of us knew it was true, and, what is more, she told us that common sense taught her that we had proved it to our undoing.

"Now the thing to do, is to put an end to time wasting!" she went on, "and I am here to help you do it, if you'll buckle in and help yourselves! In the first place the Door of Hope is always wide open for any one who will enter. Christ is the Open Door, and I need not repeat the old, old, old, but welcome story, that, while the lamp of hope burns—and that means while reason exists in man—the vilest sinner the world possesses, may find admission through it.

"Some of you, my dear boys, may be thinking that these are fine words of help-offering to such sinners as have never been in Prison, and have not to bear the stigma of "ex-Convict," and all that that handicap means, when seeking honest

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employment. But I say to such a thinker, that my message is for you, and will be to the end! Therefore, I invite you to enter this Door of Hope to a better life, and don't turn back! Having once entered, I declare to you, the worst man here, that there is no need to retrace your steps, and, doubting one. I speak with the authority of a volunteer of the Volunteers of America, who are enlisted in the service of the Lord, when I say it. You must get out of the rut in which you are now so painfully and hopelessly plodding—get out of the ways of evil, forsake your sins, and trust Jesus to do the rest!"

The "Little Mother" paused for an instant, and then asked if any one was interested enough in her words to help himself, and if so would such an one stand up? I was on my feet without a moment's hesitation, and in all parts of the chapel, to the right, the left, and the rear, I knew that men were signifying their willingness to seek the better life through the open Door of Hope.

"Praise be unto the Lord, my earnest friends!" came from Mrs. Booth with a fervency that betokened her interest in the souls of her auditors. "And now will you be seated," she asked, "while I tell you what to do?" When the room was in silence, she explained her practical plan of salvation.

"I know that the road of the men, on leaving this, or any other institution of its kind, is hard," she said, "but there is a way to make it less

hard, if you will only try, and having tried, will daily and hourly persevere—keep hewing to the line! If you will do this, I will stand by you through thick and thin, foul weather or fair. To begin with, I want you to give your hearts to Jesus. Then I want you to promise me you will come to our Hope Hall at Flushing, N. Y. I mean that you are requested to come there directly from this Prison, and remain with us until such a time as you are equipped for the fight that will make good, law-abiding men and Christians of you.

“If you will do your part, I promise that we will do our very best in the name of the blessed Saviour, to save your souls, and put you in the way of earning an upright, honest livelihood!”

“But the police, Mrs Booth.” said a little, bent, gray-haired Convict, rising to his feet; “they won’t permit me to live an honest life, particularly in the city of New York!”

“In the protection of Hope Hall the police will not interfere with you, my friendly one,” said Mrs. Booth. “I’ll stand by you! All you will have to do, is to hew to the line! So long as you do that, I’ll see that the police don’t molest you!”

“I’d like to come to the home, ma’am,” said the little old man. “Is there room for me? It’s ten years since I’ve been out in the world!”

“God bless you, my brother—yes, we have a place just cut out for you, and none will be more welcome, believe me.”

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"Thank you, thank you, ma'am," he said, in a voice that trembled with emotion.

"Bless this poor old soul, and comfort him, my Saviour," prayed Mrs. Booth, as we all bowed our heads. "Bless all these unfortunate ones, and make them the good men they may be, if they will only trust in Thee!"

This petition had scarcely ascended from her quivering lips, when she was leading us in a Gospel song pitched to a tune with which many of the prisoners seemed remarkably familiar. The melody died away, and then Mrs. Booth closed the service by reiterating her invitation to all to visit her Volunteer Home immediately after being discharged from Prison.

Needing every aid in fighting the Christian battle, I arose before the command was given by the guards to form for the march back to the Cells. Mrs. Booth saw me.

"Speak out, my brother!" she said with a glad smile that gave me a world of confidence.

"I shall be discharged in two months, and would like to be helped in my effort to follow Christ," I explained hesitatingly, and considerably perturbed too, for one who had been thoroughly self-possessed in secular affairs.

"I think your good Chaplain will make it possible for you to speak with me in the waiting-room, before I leave Clinton," said Mrs. Booth in her kindest manner. And I did have the ineffable delight of shaking the hand of this charming

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woman—this “Little Mother” to the younglings in the espousal of Christianity.

She impressed me as being one constantly hovering in an atmosphere breathing forth pure simplicity and simple piety. Her presence was so strangely and powerfully magnetic as to draw me irresistibly toward her, yet, withal, I seemed not to be in a world identical with hers. There was that in her gracious personality which almost interpreted Divinity, although, as I have just said, she was only Mrs. Maud Ballington Booth, the “Little Mother” of the children newly born into the Kingdom of Righteousness.

“I shall feel that my meeting in Clinton has not been in vain,” she said, “if you can make it convenient to come and see us at our Flushing home. There are at least two dozen of the boys there now, and they are preparing for a fresh start in the world, along the pathway that leads to the better life, both on earth and in Heaven. Will you not come down as soon as your term expires?”

“I have one appointment in New York to keep,” I explained, “and then, believe me, I shall come to your retreat—the Convicts’ haven—and try to grow stronger in the honest life!”

“Many good resolutions have been broken by procrastination!” Mrs. Booth urged, in a tone that fused with concern.

“I am going, Mrs. Booth, to see Mr. Hadley, who did more to switch me from the broad road

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of crime, to the narrow way that leads to life eternal, than any one else on earth!"

"Mr. Hadley!" she exclaimed, joyfully; "you mean Samuel Hopkins Hadley, that splendid Christian of the McAuley Mission?"

"None other, Mrs. Booth!" and I related briefly the story of my conversion, especially the portion of it which occurred in the New York Police Station.

"Praise the Lord, Mr. White!" Mrs. Booth cried ecstatically, and there was a world of thanksgiving in her exclamation. And so, in the grand personality of Mrs. Booth, God raised up for me another mighty arm to guide me in the straight and narrow way.

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CHAPTER X.

GOD'S LIGHT ATHWART THE GLOOM.

The beginning of my stay in Clinton bade fair to be all that had been said of it, and therefore I bent doggedly to the task of accepting anticipated hardships. I was firmly resolved to pay the penalty for my crimes, deeming it to be but a part of required repentance for a life wasted in the devil's employ.

This set purpose soon brought me great reward, and more deeply intrenched me in the faith. Instead of having to bear burdens which I had feared might overwhelm me, a new, unexpected and wholly undeserved vista was opened to me. It was devoid of persecution, free from obstacles that would make the pursuit of the Christian pathway more difficult, and replete with opportunities to form plans which I hoped to develop at the expiration of my term. It created another true friend, of whom I had never heard or dreamed, and in an astonishing measure showed me how the Lord pours out blessings upon His toilers in the vineyard, who are determined to be faithful regardless of what threatens.

This new friend was Julius B. Ransom, Clinton's Surgeon. He was an agreeable exception in the ranks of Prison physicians, both in character and intelligence. Not only was his standing in

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the profession unassailable, but he was also possessed of large sympathy for his immediate fellow-men, though most of these were Convicts. And, above all, he was not a graftor! I felt, in truth, that God had directed me to him, but in what manner I was never able to find out. At the time, and since, I have meditated whether or not Chaplain Sanderson of Sing Sing, being cognizant of my Christian fight, was not the agency through which God worked to draw me to Dr. Ransom.

At any rate, the good doctor gave me excellent counsel, thereby prescribing for my soul, as well as for my body. Recognizing my years, he said I ought not to do heavy work. He told Warden George Deyo so, and I did no very laborious tasks thereafter. My employment was truly light and as pleasant as it could be in penal surroundings. Altogether, my daily life was much more bearable than that of the few inmates who managed to escape the routine of Clinton, through the payment of money, and political favoritism. And let me not fail to give God the praise, for to Him, Who raised up these friends, I owe it all.

Dr. Ransom assisted me royally, in various ways. In Sing Sing I was unable to obtain stationery to make memoranda for the proposed chronicle of my life. My application for writing paper elicited the unpleasant rejoinder, which included a positive denial, "Don't think this

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Prison is a hotel!" But I had no difficulty in procuring these needed materials at Clinton. So, not long subsequent to settling in the new quarters, every available, leisure moment, was employed in the preparatory work of my book. Unquestionably, it was no trivial undertaking, and frequently I was confused as to what would best serve my purpose.

Barring extremely rare instances, perhaps no modern writer has had more interesting adventures to weave into narrative than I. My forty years of experience in crime and its varied environment had sunk a well of recollections well-nigh inexhaustible, and not infrequently, I was about distraught over what would best fit a work designed to confer everlasting benefit upon society.

A particular thing which impressed itself upon me, had to do with the administrative conditions, as a whole, in the New York State Prisons. A subdivision of this was Prison discipline. I believed it to be within bounds of reason for Convicts to have incentives for reform. Also, I realized that such incentives could not exist unless the administrators in charge of the various penal institutions set good examples before the Convicts.

For instance, it will not tend to correct the lives of criminals for them to know that the warden in charge of them, appropriates from the State's funds two hundred dollars a month to provide food for his family; one hundred in the

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same period for serving girls, coachmen and footmen, and maintains, at the State's expense, greenhouses, coach horses, cows, sheep, and other live stock, for his sole use and benefit. Neither will it win Convicts from their evil tendencies, to know that the warden closes his eyes, while his subordinate officials steal right and left, such commodities as clothing, shoes, Prison blankets, lumber, and, in fact, about everything that can be carried out of a State institution.

I have certain knowledge that these conditions existed in 1903, and information of recent date does not disclose any marked improvement. If there be doubtful ones, I would suggest that they examine the monthly Prison bills in the office of the State Comptroller. Having done this, I would further advise that a personal visit be paid to the Prisons, especially Clinton, and that observation be taken of the kind of food served to the Convicts, also an examination be made of the clothing and shoes they wear. Be certain not to confine this investigation to the Convicts who enjoy graft-attained privileges. They will be found sleek, well-supplied with good, nourishing food, comfortably clothed, and well-shod.

And, regarding brutality! This practice in penal institutions, does much to harden criminals beyond all hope of reclamation. I have known of instances in which five or six Convicts have been strung up by the thumbs at the same time, for infractions of Prison rules, and, I declare in

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calmness, and without prejudice it would be simply barbarous in the present human age.

Convicts have been flogged with clubs, until their agony would wrench the heart-strings of the ordinary man, and kindle the fires of revenge in the victims. The echoes of the cruel blows have not ceased to vibrate in my memory !

Perhaps it would enlighten those interested in this subject, to read the report made by an Investigating Committee which inquired into the conduct of Warden Isaac Fuller, and his subordinates, Principal Keeper James Moon, and Under Keeper Michael Haggerty, all of Clinton Prison. Let me record that the latter's death was not soon to be forgotten by those at his bedside. His delirium assumed an awful panorama of victims of his cruelty who marched before him with accusing fingers. The torture he seemed to suffer, was appalling ! If he had a lucid moment in which to realize an iota of what was indicated in his delirium, his suffering must have been far greater than that of his victims. James Moon is yet alive, and in comparative affluence, on a farm in the Adirondack Mountains in New York State.

It was this character of history I had in mind to write, believing, as I have already made clear, that society would be the better for it. But, taking the matter under advisement, I decided to defer it to a later day, substituting therefor, the facts related in the covers of " From Boniface to Bank Burglar."

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It may not be lacking in interest to mention here, that I completed the manuscript of my first book under most irritating conditions. In some manner what I was doing became known, and several attempts were made by officials to confiscate the manuscript. However, these came after I had finished the work and carefully secreted it outside of my Cell. I would not have felt justified in pursuing this course had I not been advised to by certain sympathetic friends who were not among the Convict population of the Prison. Anticipating difficulty and to avoid confiscation of the manuscript, I made painstaking arrangements with an official to pass it over the wall on the night following my release from Convict life.

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CHAPTER XI.

SKELLY—JUST PLAIN SKELLY.

“Free at last!” was the exhalation of my spirit, when the great gate of Clinton swung to with a harsh clang that had no further terror in it for me.

Free, free, free! once more from the restraint of bolts and bars, from the badge of the criminal, indicated in the horribly suggestive Prison garb, and, thanks be to God, free from the bondage wherein lay but limited opportunity for me to tell my fellowman what religion had done for me.

Free again from an enforced exile of the body, as I felt I was free forever from the successful assaults of the unscrupulous cohorts of sin!

My heart, in its bubbling joy, sang a new song, a pean of praise, so wonderfully attuned that all nature rang for me a new translation of sound. This great world I was looking on again, was one magnificent burst of inspiring melody. My time-worn and misused old eyes drank in with ravishing eagerness, what lay before them. I thought there never had been before me so lovely a world! The grass at my feet possessed a richer green, and the trees, nodding gracefully above me, were clothed in a more elaborate dress, though the year was fast fading into autumn and the harvest time. The dullest, and least attrac-

tive object to meet my gaze, held an interest heretofore unknown to me.

But there was no secret, unrevealed to me, in all this. I knew the reason for so vast a change in my conception of things—God was in my soul, divinely harmonizing it with all things good on the earth! He tuned my neglected, unreceptive ears, so that they vibrated to melody, hitherto far too rich in sweetness of tone for them to catch and comprehend. In brief, my combined senses had come to an acute plane of responsiveness to Divine attributes, and I was enabled thereby to perceive the beauty, the righteousness in things that had ever before been an unopened page to me.

As I strode away from the Prison, I gloried in the knowledge of a living God Whose power had been sufficient to save me from a life which had long reflected the wickedness of hell. My heart was buoyant—aye, jubilant, in the possession of a freedom from desire to do wrong, and enthusiastic in God's plan of regeneration, which included me in it. Yes, for even me, there was in prospect an eternity of peace and rest, if I proved faithful to Him, and relied upon the Divine Force which rules the universe and everything contained therein.

With what elasticity of body I moved out in the goodly world, only those who have trod in similar footsteps may be competent to judge. And as I walked and contemplated my new posi-

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tion in life, viewing it in vivid contrast with other days, the tears welled up in my eyes, and a violent sob was stifled with no small effort. But they were expressive of a contrite soul, joyous in the sweet assurance that vouchsafed for me a place in the Community of the Good!

I was to be back at the Prison early in the evening of the same day, to get my manuscript, which was to be thrown over the wall by my friend in fulfilment of his promise. Now the manner of doing this, as I have heretofore indicated, was exceedingly distasteful to me. I felt that every act in my life, henceforth, must be done in the open, and distinctly separate from anything which approached even the appearance of evil. But there was no other way to obtain the manuscript, therefore I believed that the object to be attained in this case would justify the means. A comparatively short ride on a railroad train put me in Plattsburg, where I remained until it was time to return to Dannemora in the evening.

The hour of my appointment on the outside of the wall was 10.25 o'clock, and as for the night, it was black—black enough for any evil purpose, goodness knows. When 10.30 came and there was no indication of getting the manuscript, I began to feel as though my plan was lacking God's approval. But this rather unpleasant meditation was knocked out of my mind the next instant, by a glancing blow on the left side of my head, and a

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direct one on the shoulder, from which I staggered, and would have fallen, but for the support of the Prison wall, against which I heavily rested.

For a moment I was not only deprived of my wits, but I was, as well, not a little frightened, believing that I had been welted with a heavy club. Upon pulling myself together, I could just distinguish a white parcel lying at my feet. I at once knew it was the precious manuscript! I picked it up, and, behold! a jagged stone, weighing not less than ten pounds, was fastened to it.

“Of a truth,” I thought cheerfully, “this good friend of mine concluded that my writings were of an exceedingly vaporous nature, else why had he thus carefully provided against their being wafted away in space, by some vagrant breeze? Or, on the contrary, had he justly recognized the weightiness of them, and, burning with the inspiration, added his mite to the good work in the form of this substantial *avoirdupois*?”

If, perchance, these conjectures were not sufficient, may he not have arisen to the magnificent height of testing the axiom that “Truth crushed shall rise again,” when he dropped the weighted package on my head? These, and other equally happy thoughts, thrilled me to completion, causing a momentary abstraction from the tenderness of my flesh, which had been most sorely bruised by the stone. But, seriously, I hoped and prayed that the words I had penned for the guidance of men, deep in sin as I once was,

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would awaken them to a realization of their spiritual needs, and with a force, too, that would be as beneficial to them, as it was startling to me!

Completely happy, I started on foot for Plattsburg, seventeen miles away, for walk there I must, no trains going that way at so late an hour of the night. But the journey was astonishingly short, and remarkably unexacting upon my strength, so marvelous, in fact, is the power of mind over matter.

The next day I was in New York City, and, happy thought, the following one would witness me once more clasping glad hands with my beloved Mr. Hadley.

And when the meeting came, it was even more cordial than I had dared to anticipate. He sat in the very same chair, and I on the identical sofa in the office where his burning words had so sunk into my soul.

Somehow, those pieces of furniture—the chair and sofa—are recognized factors in my conversion, and I fain would possess them, when worn beyond usefulness in the parts they fill at the McAuley Mission. Strange indeed is the sentiment that will possess one—one, for instance, like me, whose deeds have been so infamous, and so impossible of forgiveness, except at the hands of Divine mercy.

“Trust not your own strength for an instant!” Mr. Hadley said to me, as we chatted over my conversion, and in which connection I had stoutly

declared the improbability, nay, impossibility, of ever receding from the faith. "Nevertheless, my dear fellow, my good comrade in Christ, you must beware of your own strength, unsupported by His great right arm. Take heed, dear brother, where you stand, for the way is set with many snares, and the devil and his emissaries are as wary as they are cunning and secret."

I told Mr. Hadley of the early appointment I had to temporarily join Mrs. Booth's Flushing Colony.

"By all means go there," he acquiesced, "and when it is possible, come back here, for there always will be a welcome awaiting you."

We clasped hands again like brothers of the same parents, it seemed to me—not as men who had once been crooks and drunkards, but ultimately saved by the same blood sacrifice.

"Good-bye, George, and may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ go with you," he said solemnly.

"Good-bye, Mr. Hadley," I answered thickly, and hurried away.

Two hours later I was knocking at the door of Mrs. Booth's hospitable roof, and was agreeably surprised at the almost elegance of the mansion. I learned subsequently, that it had been the dwelling of a man possessed of great wealth, and had come into the keeping of Mrs. Booth for the purpose to which she had dedicated it.

A hasty glance swept in a spread of gardens and farm land, besides an acre or two reserved for

lounging spots and cosy corners much needed by the guests of our "Little Mother." Altogether, I was exceedingly impressed with the genial and inviting aspect of the house and its surroundings.

My confident knock was answered by a man who appeared to be remarkably in unison with these first impressions. Intuitively he knew, in a general way, the quality and object of his visitor, and in evidence of this, flung the door wide open.

"Come in—we are glad to see you!" he welcomed, putting me perfectly at ease by the genuineness of the greeting.

"Your name is—" he asked with a smile that carried the inquiry.

"George White!" I answered.

"Not George Bliss, George Miles, Mark Shinburn's friend?" he questioned, with increasing interest. I bowed in acknowledgment of the identification, feeling none too proud of it. In the interim we had proceeded to a homelike reception room where my new friend bade me be seated.

"I'm Skelly—just plain Skelly!" he explained, "but I hope counted among the redeemed ones from sin!"

"You, too, have known what it is to pay the penalty?" I inquired.

"A bitter price it was," he cried with a vehemence that astounded me.

"But the blood of Jesus Christ has covered all

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—is it not so?” I asked quickly, grieved over the possibility of having awakened memories that harried him. He grasped the tenor of my thoughts, and hastened to put me at rest.

“Don’t be troubled, dear friend,” this Skelly—just plain Skelly—said. “None of the old things have power to move me. I wish to blot out the past spent in the devil’s pastime, but I am not affrighted when it rises up before me. The dear Christ is my great defender, and He never fails me.

“But come with me,” he exclaimed, breaking into another mood, in which there was a mingling of cheer and concern. “You haven’t had your dinner, I know.”

So this was Skelly—just plain Skelly. I knew who he was, and where he came from, and that he was Mrs. Booth’s faithful ally in the conduct of her haven. When she was not present to direct the affairs there, he was in full charge, never failing to perform his part in the Master’s vineyard. He took me to a bathroom complete in the minutest detail.

“Refresh yourself here!” he said, “and when you have finished, dinner will be served. “Remember,” he added before departing, “that this is home until you have shaken off the atmosphere of Prison, and pulled yourself together.”

I had a delicious bath, and with a sensation of renewed, physical being, went to the dining-room where I sat at the table with a group of

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men, who appeared to be partaking of a new phase of life. It would be futile for me to attempt to express in words the lasting benefit afforded these men and me by the whole administration of Mrs. Booth's way-station on the road to a better life. My spiritual self was encouraged, my physical being reinvigorated, and, all in all, the two weeks of sojourn there, proved to be invaluable as a stepping-stone in the narrow way of rectitude in which I was determined to tread, regardless of how thickly it might be set with traps of the enemy.

Skelly, who answered my knock at the door when the visit began, was the same kind Skelly who bade me au revoir at the leave-taking. He seemed to be, in every way, worthy of the confidence Mrs. Booth reposed in him. Owing to the manifold duties of the "Little Mother," her appearance at the home was not as frequent as her guests hoped for, but she spoke through Skelly. He interpreted the language of hope to the weary, and sometimes uncertain one, and in every way enacted the role of the good Samaritan. He possessed the brother-love that made all with whom he came in contact, feel that kinship so essential to those laboring side by side in the Vineyard of the Lord.

And it must not be gathered that Skelly came in this godly realm of usefulness, as an early avower of Christianity. Quite the reverse! He had plowed long in the field of sin, and sown

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tares almost to the choking of the very best in him. He had known the pain of being a thief, suffered the stigma of occupying the felon's Cell, and experienced the joy of casting all his sins on the Lord to the salvation of his soul. Therefore, the better was Skelly qualified to speak to fellows of a kind of which he was once one.

He taught as one who had acquired the knowledge through bitter experience. The pitfalls they would meet with, he knew of, for his feet had been, unwarily, caught in them. The sorrows and disappointments which they might encounter, he could tell them of, because he had been afflicted with them. To know Skelly was to draw inspiration from him, and as it was my blessed privilege to study him with the fervor that I delved into all things appertaining to the Christian life, I left the home with the complete knowledge that I had been in the fellowship of a wonderful man.

No one possessed of a spark of religion, or of a desire to lead an honest life, ever left there under Skelly's ministrations feeling that he had been denied good food for his stomach, had been asked to labor in the harvest fields or the grounds, beyond what was required to take away the sting of charity, or had been deprived of the spiritual consolation that weak humanity so much needs.

It was not my privilege to often meet this noble Christian, but his example ever shone forth as a

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beacon-light, by which I have directed my course, much as the mariner keeps his ship off the breakers by the warning lighthouse on the rock-bound shore.

Let it be said again and again, that Mrs. Booth's Hope Hall has been well named. Hope beamed its welcome presence to me everywhere—in every nook and corner. And it is thus to-day—the Convict's harbor, his sure port in which to steer for respite from the temptations of life. No greater commendation of it can be said, than that its usefulness grew until more land and a larger shelter were necessary to continue the divinely approved work. The Flushing accommodations rapidly failed to meet the demands, and it was considered to be a movement of wisdom when Hope Hall was transferred to Orangeburgh, N. Y. In the later haven—a most beautiful garden spot—Mrs. Booth's friends, the lowly ones, gather, even unto this day, for encouragement in the Christian warfare. Once each year all the faithful gather at Hope Hall to compare notes, to tell what God has done for them.

While in Prison I had been corresponding with officers of the Life-Boat Mission of Chicago, among them being its superintendent, Mr. E. B. Van Dorn, and Dr. David Paulson, the visiting physician. They had sent me numerous copies of the *Life-Boat*, an intensely interesting periodical devoted to the furtherance of the Mission's

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splendid work among the shipwrecks, drifting along the waters of Lost Opportunities, through having neglected to avail themselves of the Great Divine Pilot, to guide their barks safely in tempestuous seas.

I found the Mission at No. 471 State Street, where I was made very welcome, Superintendent Van Dorn and Dr. Paulson evincing the utmost interest in me. I attended their meetings at every opportunity, took part in them, and, in all ways possible, endeavored to perform my duty as a Christian. The work of the Mission was conducted on much the same plan as the McAuley Mission in New York, and, naturally, a tremendous amount of good was accomplished among the human wrecks who came under its benevolent influence.

Upon leaving for the East, I was profoundly impressed that William T. Stead, the English critic on morals, would have dealt less harshly with Chicago had he spent more of his time at the Life-Boat Mission. Certainly the character of the Christian effort put forth there, was such as to be felt in all sections of the city. It has been truly said that one is known by his works, and, surely, there was ample evidence of God's blessing having been freely bestowed on the Life-Boat Mission.

Directly after this, I went to my dear old Vermont home. Somehow the news of my conversion had preceded me, and I was received by

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friends who had despaired of my salvation, with a heartiness that was as gratifying as it was touching. Of a truth, God raised up more friends for me, and in a marvellous manner made my effort to keep the faith much less difficult than it would have otherwise been.

My start in the Christian pathway was made without funds, so I immediately set about to find work. There was precious little that a man of my years could do, except to work on a farm, and soon I was on my hands and knees pulling weeds from the fields, and doing other odd jobs wherever I could get them. Often my stiffened back seemed unequal to the tasks, but I must live, and to do it, required bread and meat.

In the meantime I was making herculean efforts to get my first book, "From Boniface to Bank Burglar," in the hands of a publisher. Through its agency I desired to demonstrate to the world what it was that primarily directed me to the commission of crime. And, too, I wanted to counteract, if possible, some of the evil for which I was individually responsible.

Very earnest was I, to show the people that I had been treacherously robbed of all I possessed in money and lands, and in turn, in robbing others — the rich — I was but playing the game of high finance, by a rule not so universally recognized as the one daily followed in the stock gambling exchanges of so-called civilized countries. Then, having done this, I wanted to prove

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to those who had regarded me as a menace to society, that I was no longer such, but rather, was inclined to become a benefactor of it, by exposing the secrets of the burglar-craft, of which I had been one of considerable notoriety, as recorded in the annals of crime and criminals.

Then through this volume, "The Penalty and Redemption," a sequel to the first book, I was determined to manifest how awful were the steps I had taken, what price I had paid for breaking the Divine and secular laws, and how God, in His great mercy, allowed His Holy Spirit to enter my wicked soul, when life's pendulum was about to be stilled and brought me up from the cesspool of sin, into the full realization of His power to forgive, even the vilest sinner in all the world!

I must not be charged with egotism in saying that I worked with great diligence to accomplish my purpose, and I did succeed to a certain degree. My book, "From Boniface to Bank Burglar," was issued in due time, and found quick sale in the New England States. I believed that the work in which I was putting heart and soul interest, was destined to prove to an unbelieving world the infinite power and boundless beneficence of God. But having written the first book at a time when my Christian experience was in its swaddling clothes, the immaturity of my reasoning was palpably in evidence. As I progressed in the spiritual life, the conviction settled upon me that I had dwarfed good example

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and overshadowed it in personal grievance against man.

Thanks be to God, however, He opened my eyes by increasing my spiritual understanding, so that I saw the error of my way. In the light of this, I saw how in "From Boniface to Bank Burglar," I had bitterly arraigned man and conditions. The spirit in which it was treated had more in it of the human hurt supplemented by resentment, than of the weak human who had permitted himself to commit a crime against which he should have revolted to the extent of bearing, unflinchingly, any punishment, no matter how severe or unmerited it might be.

Then and there I resolved that "The Penalty and Redemption" should depict the more advanced, and true state of my regenerate soul. When I wrote "From Boniface to Bank Burglar" I must have been sadly deficient in respect to the broad spirit of forgiveness that constrained the Saviour to say:

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Instead of an unreserved complete forgiveness, there was in me an underlying, positive vein of keen resentment. Though I was hardly conscious of this, nevertheless, it was in my heart. I had not then, after all, arrived at that desirable state where I could, without an iota of mental reservation, forgive those who had so terribly persecuted me. But later, how wonderfully God's

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spirit operated in me. I found myself able to say in "Penalty and Redemption:"

"Herbert T. Bellows, stocks and bonds holder, I freely forgive you as God forgave me.

"F. F. Lane, District Attorney, I have no resentment for even you. Though you placed me in the malefactor's dock, and allowed the real thief to go free, not in the tiniest corner of my heart can there be found room for aught but forgiveness for you.

"Judge Doe, though you connived with others in putting the last straw upon my burdened shoulders, and impelled me, in a desperate moment of weak manhood, to plunge into sin, I forgive you, as I have faith to believe God has forgiven me, and will continue to forgive me to the end."

Thank God, all resentment has gone from me forever. I hate no man on earth, nor have I the faintest feeling of anger for the memory of any one who did me evil, and has passed on to the final, great accounting. Those who have read the preceding volume are in a mood to judge whether or not a victory for the faith was won, in my complete change of heart.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BANKER AND THE EX-BURGLAR.

"I will be pleased to see you at the bank whenever you find it convenient to come."

How simple these words seem, in a casual reading. A plain, kindly invitation for me to call at the Cheshire National Bank of Keene, N. H., at my leisure, and see Mr. R. H. Porter, its venerable vice-president. But what a world of significance I found in the letter from which I culled this quotation. I have not regarded any other experience of a secular nature with so much real gratification since my conversion.

The banker asked the former burglar to come and see him, and I went, but just what day or week it was, I do not now recall. It was, at all events, after the publication of my first book. Mr. Porter received me with enthusiasm.

"My old pupil and friend!" he cried, "I'm so glad to see you, and hear the good news!"

He quite unnerved me, but I managed to show, in my quiet manner, how glad I was to possess the confidence of so stalwart a man, and first citizen of his town.

"Sit here, George," he bade me, pointing out a chair in his office, "for I want to have a good long talk with you. Tell me how you are getting along."

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"Fighting the good fight of the faith," I answered, "and doing my level best."

"Right, right, and it should be so," he exclaimed approvingly.

"With God and such friends as you to help me," I replied feelingly, "how can I fail to be victorious over sin and the devil, and live down the dreadful past?"

"It is too bad the world doesn't judge a person by what he is, and not by what he has been," Mr. Porter said with a vehemence that filled me with surprise.

"You mean, Mr. Porter," I was moved to say, in translation of the thought his words hardly expressed, "that if I were judged by the life I am now trying to live, instead of by the reputation of outlawry which still clings to me, my fighting in the Christian army would not be so difficult?"

He nodded his head approvingly, after deliberating a moment over my abruptness in putting it.

"You present the bitter pellet, minus its sugar coating!" he answered, with a smile that was knit with a serious mood.

I was unable afterward to clearly explain how I became possessed of a strong desire to resent the fate that made me what I was that minute. It was extremely out of joint with my profession of Christianity, besides causing me to waste time in vain regrets.

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Mr. Porter detected my conflicting emotions.

"What is it, my old friend?" he asked, in a tone that fanned into flame the mood which for the moment controlled me.

"I wish I were back again in those old days!" burst from me with a ferocity that set my whole body a-tremble. "Some one has said, 'Oh God! turn back Thy universe, and give me yesterday!' My cry is that. Give me, my God! give me yesterday again, only let the yesterday represent the innocent school days, when I knew you! Oh, if God would turn back my days, then would I unfold cleaner pages in place of those hideous, blotted ones I can not rid myself of!"

I bowed my head in profound grief and remorse, proving for the instant how weak, after all, was I, who had felt so stanch in the faith.

"There, there, my dear friend, my old pupil," said Mr. Porter, placing his hand tenderly on my shoulder, "it would be easier to change the leopard's spots than to destroy the indelible record of the past! You may hedge it in, yet it will be there! The only way is to drive a stake down, and never, never return beyond it! Blaze another path with the keen blade of the Gospel, and never swerve from it. Anything else is vain repining."

"I was weak for a moment, Mr. Porter, and for that little instant envious of you. How proudly you stand among men, your life already crowned with the glory of years that are approaching their flood. You stand honored of God and man, while

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I—well, I was your pupil, in the little old red brick schoolhouse we both remember so well. You taught me diligently, and failed not to tell me of the path of rectitude in which I should travel. Time moved on, and I grew to manhood and commercial affairs. Your talents, put to good use, carried you to the banking-house. We met in business transactions, you the banker and I the commercial man. Thousands of dollars passed between us. We were both successful, and then——”

The rush of emotion overcame me for a bit, and I was silent, Mr. Porter meanwhile being consumed with anxiety. I went on:

“There came a change in one character of the life play. That was not you—it was George White. You remained the banker, an honored citizen, while I became the burglar—the thief.” Mr. Porter sprang from his seat and interrupted me.

“You shall not unnecessarily scourge yourself,” he cried. “Don’t use so harsh a term.”

“Let me say it ever so strongly,” I urged, “I feel it will do me good. Perhaps a feebler realization of God’s mercy might make me less humble than I should be.”

“You were driven into crime, George—most cruelly put to it. Enemies practically forced you off your own doorstep, out into the broad waste of wrong-doing,” said my friend soothingly.

“Don’t try to make my sins seem too plausible,

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Mr. Porter," I went on earnestly. "For years I fondly nursed that delusion in my breast, as an excuse to rob man, and break the laws of God. It was indeed a delusion. Now, I know, for my heart tells me truly, that I should have stood up like an everlasting wall against my persecutors, and put my trust in Him to confound them, for that would have been their fate, ultimately."

"As I now contemplate the facts of your down-fall of more than forty years ago," broke in my friend with extreme fervor, "they almost stagger my credulity. In the illumination of to-day, your varied experiences thrill me intensely."

"They blackened my soul almost beyond redemption," I supplemented solemnly.

"I think that an almighty and just God sympathized with you, George—even when you sinned against Him most. His Spirit must have been following you, no matter how unworthy you were."

"I should have trusted him implicitly in all of those dark days of long ago, regardless of what happened to me," I said simply.

"Yet God did not permit those who wronged you to escape unpunished," said Mr. Porter, with considerable feeling.

"I have forgiven all who conspired in any way to ruin me, Mr. Porter, as freely as my Master has forgiven me. Thanks to His blessed name, my heart responds truly to this sentiment."

"The man from whose persecutions you suf-

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ferred most, has gone his way," said my friend, with a sadness that was infectious.

"You mean Herbert Bellows?" I inquired, feeling that he referred to him.

"Yes! You probably know that retribution came to him?" I nodded in the affirmative.

"Being cognizant of the circumstances through which he enriched himself at your expense," went on Mr. Porter, "yet I pitied him. He went to his grave in abject, pinching poverty, and absolutely friendless."

"Yes, yes, he paid the penalty," I said, "but I hope he made his peace with God."

"Of that I am not informed, though I do know he suffered untold misery. How else could it be with one who had known riches without stint?"

Having said this, Mr. Porter turned enthusiastically to the subject of my book, "From Boniface to Bank Burglar," having read a copy I sent him.

"I can't thank you any better for it," he said, "than by telling you I picked it up casually, intending to read it at intervals, but becoming fascinated, finished it in one reading."

"I hope my books will serve a better purpose than the mere relation of facts of how I got into a criminal life," I said explanatorily, "for I want it known broadcast, that if there is hope for one so sinful as I was, then how much more of a chance is there for those who have not stolen from their fellow-men."

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"It must be so, George, if you are sincere, and I have great faith in you." My friend went on: "I was particularly interested in the chapter of the Walpole Savings Bank burglary in New Hampshire. You did well to write about it. Now I thought I was very familiar with its history, but you have thrown much new light on it. I have never, until now, understood the depth of the outrageous wrong you suffered, and I don't think it was generally known to our people here."

I thanked Mr. Porter for his unsolicited confidence, but made no other comment. He went on:

"I congratulate you most cordially for abandoning a life which taught you so many severe lessons, and honor you for coming back to the old scenes of your youthful days, and numbering yourself among the old friends whose confidence and esteem you may now justly claim."

I did not attempt to apologize for the hot tears that rushed to my eyes, filling them almost to blindness. How thirstily I drank in the solacing words of cheer and encouragement, uttered by this spiritually-youthful, aged man. He was evidently of a set mind to befriend me, who was so sadly in need of it.

It did not seem possible, at first, that this man of wealth, vice-president in a leading bank of which he was a substantial owner, could have been at one time my school teacher. He had industriously employed the talents which God had given him, while I—but he spoke again:

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"I will be pleased to see you at the bank, George, any time you find it convenient to come."

"Thank you," I replied, in a way that told him of my gratitude.

"And I assure you, George," said Mr. Porter, with a smile, "that I won't have a detective trailing you, as has often been the case in other days I might mention."

It would have been impossible to conceal my surprise had I been of a mind to.

"I fear I don't comprehend you," was my ejaculation. "Detectives trailing me? When?"

"Unless I am in error, you never came in this State while in the profession of a—a—"

"Burglar, Mr. Porter—go on!" and I said the word for him—such was his kindness.

"Well, then, I had a watch put on you for the safety of our bank, and that's a fact."

There was nothing for me to say, and remaining silent my friend proceeded.

"But not now, I am happy to say. Rather, I shall, it is more than probable, consult you as to the best method of making our bank safe from fertile brains and covetous hands."

It will require little, if any, imagination, for one to realize what joy I experienced, as a result of this rebinding of ties so long severed.

CHAPTER XIII.

SHADOWS AND SUNSHINE.

The first sorrow to befall me after my conversion was the death of Mr. Hadley on February 9, 1906, followed by his funeral, which took place from the McAuley Mission a few days later.

Words from my pen must necessarily be inadequate to express the feeling of loss that possessed me. Mr. Hadley was the cornerstone, in the temporal life, on which I had builded. Next to God, I depended upon him for counsel, and he never failed me. He was my terrestrial father, as God was and is my spiritual Father. Considering these supports I do not so much marvel at times, why I was able to escape from the ball and chain that bound me in the pit of sin.

Far be it from me to think of writing a eulogy on Mr. Hadley. Better that that should come from those who knew him longer than I. Not least among these was Rev. Dr. J. Wesley Johnston of the Old John Street Methodist Episcopal Church, in New York.

In commending Mr. Hadley's book, whose title page bears the name of "Down in Water Street," Dr. Johnston said, when Mr. Hadley was yet alive:

"A book written by the superintendent of the Jerry McAuley Mission in Water Street needs

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no introduction from me, for the fame of this Mission is world-wide, and its honored and successful superintendent is known to all Christian people. . . . May God bless this book. And may he bless its writer, and spare him for many years to the work he is conducting with such success."

Rev. J. Wilbur Chapman, D.D., of the Fourth Presbyterian Church of New York, attended the funeral, and delivered a beautiful personal tribute to the memory of his dead friend. In this connection I should state that Dr. Chapman's eulogy was the more appropriate, since Mr. Hadley had requested that the doctor speak at his obsequies.

"If you survive me, doctor," Mr. Hadley had said many months before his death, "speak at my funeral of the blessed Jesus, and His great power to save from sin."

Dr. Chapman often choked with emotion as he talked with heart knowledge of his dear, departed friend. Seldom has such pathos fallen from human lips.

"If I speak briefly to-day," said the doctor, "it must be remembered that I am speaking out of a full heart, and if my utterances seem broken, then please do not forget that my emotion is almost beyond my control. It is as if one had been called to stand beside the casket of his own brother, and yet he was more to me than brother; or, it is as if one were standing beside the casket of a member of his own household, for I think I

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could almost say that my affection for S. H. Hadley was as deep and tender as for those who are my own flesh and blood, and I say the truth when I declare that I had rather be S. H. Hadley lying dead in his coffin, having stirred these gracious memories in the minds of so many of us, and having changed so many lives for good, than to be what the world would call New York's most famous citizen. . . . His going away has left us desolate—the world actually seems a lonesome place to live. New York seems to me to have lost something—as a matter of fact, the best of it has gone away, and I can never again think of the city as being what it has been in the past, when S. H. Hadley lived and loved and worked here in the spirit of Jesus. . . . He preached a great salvation. No one was too far away from God for Him, no life was ever too low in his estimation for salvation, and no one was ever too hopeless for him not to make an effort to lead him or her to Christ. He had an uttermost salvation for every wandering sinner."

Powerful words, these last. But for the sentiment in them, I might still be a wanderer in sin, for I was indeed a striking example of the efficacy of an "uttermost salvation." And so my friend passed on to his reward, leaving a vacancy in my life that was difficult to fill—but God doth watch over the sparrows, the Divine truth emphasizes, and as they were not too inconsequential for his notice, so was not I, in the loss

of my earthly counsellor. He raised up for me another staff upon which to lean when I grew faint by the wayside, in the person of John H. Wyburn, who, for several years was the assistant superintendent of the Jerry McAuley Mission, and succeeded Mr. Hadley as its superintendent.

As the Mission had thrived under the guidance of Mr. Hadley, so it continued to prosper, as a natural response to the able direction of Mr. Wyburn, who proved himself to be a worthy disciple to wear the mantle descended from his predecessor. Of a truth, Mr. Wyburn has since shown himself to be well deserving of the praise given him by thousands of loyal workers in the Vineyard of the Lord.

As a co-laborer in the Mission with Mr. Hadley, Mr. Wyburn was thoroughly beloved. Those who came to intimately know and love Mr. Hadley, remarked upon the brotherly love that existed between them. Perhaps no better illustration of it may be had, than the appended extract from a letter which Mr. Hadley wrote to Mr. Wyburn on the occasion of the latter's celebration of the sixteenth anniversary of his conversion :

"I have known you probably closer than any man living since the hour of your conversion. I have learned to love you more and deeper each day of our journey together ; your spotless, beautiful, Christian life, tender love for the lost and erring, your candid, manly friendship, make you



Underwood & Underwood

John H. Wyburn, Superintendent of the McAuley Mission



a peerless missionary, and have endeared you to thousands all over this globe. I have never enjoyed any one's company, as a co-worker in this great fight for souls, as I have yours. Your love and sympathy have cheered me on, when, sometimes, I have thought that heart and flesh would fail. In all these years we have never had a word or look of difference.

"You are the best loved man of us all. God bless you! God bless your precious wife and child, and may we at last meet in that bright land above, where sin can never cause any more tears or sorrow, and we can forever dwell with those we have wept and prayed over down here."

It was with no small degree of satisfaction that I was privileged to obtain from Mr. Wyburn the narrative of his conversion, told in his own simple, forceful language:

"I was sent with a letter of introduction to Mr. S. H. Hadley, of No. 316 Water Street, on the 25th day of September, 1888, by one of the converts of the Mission, who did not say anything to me about the fact of Mr. Hadley being the superintendent of the McAuley Mission, but simply said, 'This is a friend of mine—he will help you.' On the way down to the Mission I came to the conclusion that I would strike him for ten dollars.

"Fortunately for me he was not at home, but I retained the letter, and went out looking for more whiskey. I was unsuccessful in getting much

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money that afternoon, and I believe God was in it, for it had been easy for me to get five or ten dollars a day. I had done an extensive business in New York and Brooklyn, and had lots of friends.

"I hunted all the afternoon for a man who had been one of my foremen for many years, and finally found him. But he had just paid out all of his ready money for a new oven, he having recently started in the bakery business. He could only give me a quarter of a dollar. With that I bought my last drink, crossed the bridge, and came to the McAuley Mission.

"It has always puzzled me to know how I found it, for I knew nothing of the neighborhood. My best belief is that God was leading me. Anyhow I woke up, as it were, to find myself seated in the Mission, still holding on to the letter. Even then, I didn't have the slightest idea of what I would encounter.

"It was my very first experience of the kind. I immediately became interested in the man sitting next to me—a red-headed Irishman who wanted to get a place to sleep. I told him I would give him the price, and he did get a bed that night. Though I have never seen him since, I have always prayed for him.

"Some one told Mr. Hadley that I wanted to see him, and he came to the seat where I was. I handed him the letter. After reading it he said, 'Well, what can I do for you?' I told him I

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wanted to get sobered up so I could go back about my business, and he said :

“ ‘Is that all you want?’ I thought, ‘If you only knew how impossible it is for me to keep sober, you wouldn’t speak so lightly about it.’

“But in a moment he said, his face beaming with light and love :

“ ‘What you need, my dear brother, is Jesus Christ as your friend and Saviour. He will sober you up, and you will never want another drink.’

“I accepted his pressing invitation to stay to the meeting, and what a wonderful meeting it was! The hymns that were sung took me back to the days of childhood. Every man seemed to be saying to me, through his testimony, “There’s hope for you—Jesus will save you!” And when the man who sent me to the Mission stood up, and said he was saved, I immediately got up and said, ‘I want some of that!’ And that very moment the great transaction was done.

“ ‘All the fitness He requireth, is to feel your need of Him.’

“Yes, Mr. Hadley did know what I needed, for God forgave my sins, my rebellion, and made me a new man in Christ Jesus.

“I went to the penitent form at the close of the meeting, the devil following me every step of the way. When I got down on my knees to pray, he very vividly brought to my mind the old life of unbelief, and said, ‘What’s the use of your

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praying—you don't believe in prayer anyhow?" I got up and down, and up and down several times. Finally the victory was won—sweet deliverance came—victory through the might and power of the precious blood of Jesus, and from that very moment I believed that I would never take another drink of whiskey. Every drop of blood in my veins had been crying out for it, but Jesus had taken me at my word, the very moment I said, 'I will!' With Jesus in my heart, the old life passed away.

"There were times, however, when I suffered the tortures of the damned, and it seemed as if all of the demons of hell were tugging at my life, and sleep was impossible all night long, but through it all Jesus was with me. I would have given any part of my body, if I could have gotten entirely rid of the appetite, but Jesus and He alone saved me from it.

"It was the most strenuous fight I ever had—the devil was after my life. 'But he had me once and let me go, and he can't have me any more.' And from that very moment I have been a free man. Oh! the luxury of freedom! With Jesus in my heart and life, how sweet it is to live.

"I have been, from that night, holding out the life line to lost, dying drunkards in this dear old Mission! For three years I had the privilege of being superintendent of the Bowery Mission, and God wonderfully used my feeble efforts. All over this land are men who have been redeemed

through the simple testimony which God has given me to tell—the story of His matchless grace to save and keep a sinner like me.

“Long ago I gave my life to this work. It is true I have been tempted to give it up, and, yielding once, left the Bowery Mission, which I deeply regretted. But God called me back, and I have never wanted to run away again. I want to give my life as did my beloved brother—who, a few months ago, went to his reward—for the salvation of the drunkards of this land, and point them to the only One who can help them—Jesus, the precious Son of God.”

Such was the man whom God had put in my way, that the fight for eternal righteousness which I was waging, might be won at last. Is it strange that I was thankful, and vowed with all the sincerity of a redeemed soul to press on? Nor was my assistance of the temporal sort limited to Mr. Wyburn. As the days merged into weeks and months, I discovered others extending anxious hands to help me over slippery places, and whisper encouragement.

Rev. Dr. Johnston, of Old John Street M. E. Church, whose friendship for Mr. Hadley has been briefly referred to, heard of me and my unfortunate life in crime, and recent emancipation. He, too, extended the unsheathed hand of friendship, and bade me welcome to his fold. Aye, it was the right hand of fellowship he gave me, and it had blood in it, fresh from a heart

burning with compassion and a yearning to help me. And when he said, "Come with us!" I responded, my heart bounding with renewed hope, and I was proud that my name would be recorded on the membership roll of Old John Street Church.

In and out of season, Dr. Johnston labored earnestly to render my Christian endeavor rich with the fulness of a great reward.

Through his instrumentality other Christian influences came into my life. From all sides, from the ranks of the poor, and the circles of wealth, I received a royal welcome to the society of churchly companionship.

The McAuley Mission, too, bore me many friends of high and low degree, in the reckoning of worldly possessions, but all equally exalted in the fellowship royal of Christ, the Master.

Among these was Joseph J. Rafter, the redeemed drunkard-printer, of Springfield, Mass. His case appealed to me with a personal interest that was entirely natural. Joseph Rafter had been on the border of utter ruin, as the price of indulgence in rum, and it had been my bitter, relentless enemy, too, for the better part of a lifetime. He had been saved from its curse through the grace of God and the interposition of friends. I, too, had been able to cut loose from the terrible appetite, and when I first knew him, was fighting the demon with a determination to win by the aid of that same merciful Power.

Who on earth was able to give me better counsel in such a warfare than he—Joseph Rafter? He had been pursued by the enemy until friends appeared and pointed out to him the highway leading to emancipation. The still, small Voice had spoken, and he had heard it. When I confessed to him of encounters with this common enemy, and exhibited the scars, we counselled together, and joined forces for the purpose of waging continual war on the camp of this soul-destroyer.

I discover myself without capacity to meet the happy effort of penning words powerful enough to express my admiration for this new friend, who proved himself to be a wonderful example of splendid manhood. Therefore I turn to sources better qualified to sing the deserved praise of this my esteemed friend Joseph Rafter.

In commenting on him, Superintendent Wyburn, of the Mission, has said:

"I wish you could have seen Brother Joe Rafter when he first came to our Mission. He looked to be fully twenty years older, the most unhappy, wretched specimen of the devil's work I think I have ever seen. He is now one of our leading Converts—tender, loving, and true always ready to help in any way, wonderfully earnest in seeking after the salvation of others, loving everybody and beloved by every one."

What a New England editor thought of Mr.

Rafter and his conversion, may be gathered from the following, which was published on September 26, 1906, in the *New England Homestead*:

“A master of his craft—when he let the drink alone.”

“That was a common expression among the acquaintances of Joseph J. Rafter when he was in business in Springfield, about fifteen years ago, and it was about as near the mark as could be hit. Joe Rafter was considered the ablest printer in this end of Massachusetts, and, as the head of the Rafter-Ripley Company, successors to the old established business of Weaver, Shipman and Company—where he served his apprenticeship in the building now occupied by the Board of Trade—he drifted away from here and was heard of occasionally in distant places, until he dropped entirely out of sight. This week, recollections of Joe Rafter were revived by the receipt of the following unique invitation from John H. Wyburn, superintendent of the McAuley Mission, of New York:

DEAR FRIEND: You are cordially invited to be present and assist in the celebration of the first anniversary of the conversion of our beloved Brother Joseph J. Rafter, which will be held at the Old Jerry McAuley Water Street Mission, No. 316 Water Street New York City, Tuesday evening, October 9,

1906, at 7.30 o'clock. Your presence will be especially welcome, to rejoice with him for God's mercy and loving-kindness in saving and keeping him from a wretched, drunken, sinful life, by His wonderful love and power alone, raising him up from the very jaws of death. Praise His precious Name! He and He alone can save.

"Joe Rafter, who spent all of his early life in Springfield, was a protege of the late Ben Weaver, and was one of the chief factors in giving the Weaver, Shipman & Company printing shop its reputation for fine work. His fame for artistic composition was widespread, and when the late Curtis B. Wells went out of the firm, he took Joe with him, and the Wells-Rafter Printing Company was established on Main Street opposite Haynes' Hotel. J. Eveleth Griffith, now of Boston, was a member of this firm. Joe soon sought other fields to conquer, and worked in responsible capacities with some of the largest printing firms in the country.

"Finally he landed in Hartford, Conn., and as superintendent of R. S. Peck and Company, brought that firm to a high standing. Joe knew all the tricks of estimating and saving press work and other expenses on book and catalogue printing in ways unfamiliar to the average printer, and one of his chief delights was to have big

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contracts follow him about the country in whatever big printing plants he located. He was with the Hartford firm for a dozen years, in the late nineties, and early in this century, then left on one of his leaving-spells to go with the Griffith, Axtell and Cady Company, of Holyoke, for a year. Yet after that R. S. Peck and Company called him back again.

"Joe Rafter's only failing was an irresistible breaking away for a periodical jag. He would stay sober for months, often not drinking a drop, then suddenly disappear for a two or three weeks' 'time.' It was at the end of these sprees that he usually changed his employer, though often against his employer's wishes, for it was a peculiar fact in Rafter's career that his employer was usually ready to overlook his one failing, even though he left the shop in the lurch, for his value to the office when he was all right. Mr. Peck took him back half a score of times during his Hartford career, and in one of Rafter's contracts for a year with a big printing concern—one that knew his failing, too—he had inserted a clause that permitted him a periodical absence from duty, as he might see fit, without breaking the contract.

"His restless disposition finally carried him away from Hartford, and Springfield has not heard much from him, till this latest ebullition and invitation to see him as a redeemed man, which was mailed to a few friends here. The

invitation is artistically printed, and evidently done by Rafter himself. He was married and his wife and he seem to stick together through all his roamings and vicissitudinous life. While in Springfield, Rafter was for over five years a member of the local militia, and of the Masonic fraternity, and Knights of Pythias, Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, and Red Men, and the most widely known printer in the town."

I have read with unabated interest Mr. Rafter's own account of his sudden change from an existence steeped in sin and rum. It told me in no uncertain words what manner of man he was under the destructive rule of the devil, and showed me, in glorious contrast, his subsequent life, filled with the joys of a clear conscience through sin abandoned, and a justifiable pride in the complete triumph of manhood over an appetite debauched.

With Mr. Rafter's permission I have appended this manly confession, that it may obtain widespread attention, and, perhaps, stand out as an object lesson to some poor, misguided, hopeless wayfarer:

"I thank God for salvation. I am a redeemed drunkard. A newspaper extract printed in another part of this narrative tells of my downward career. During those years I had the advantage of all cures administered in sanitariums and hospitals. Released from the New Haven Hospital, where my wife had committed me, I immedi-

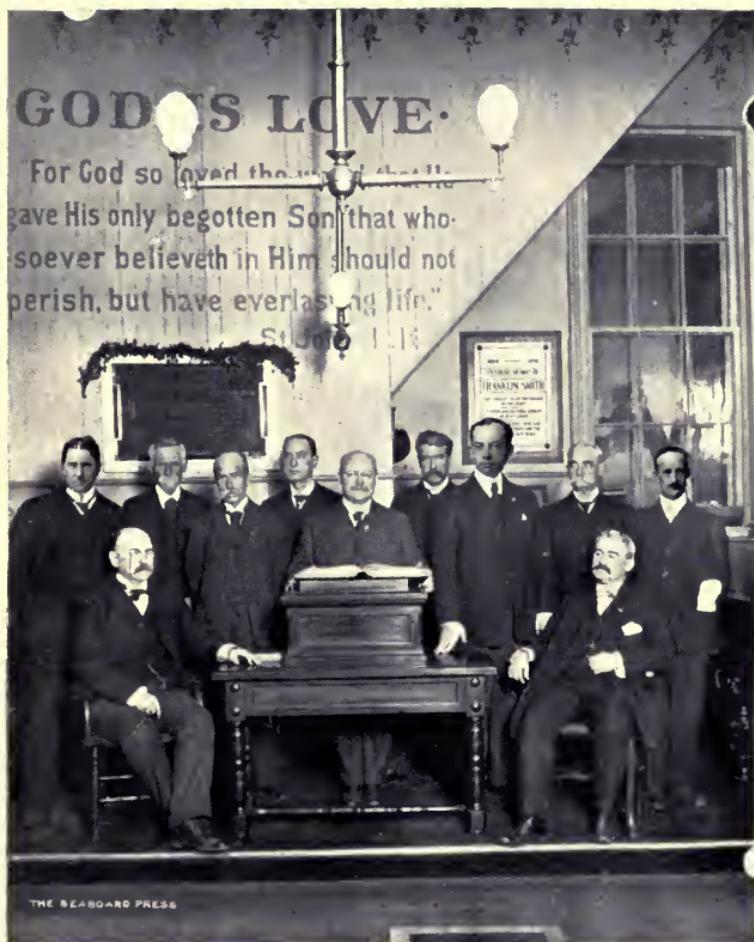
ately came to New York. Having no money, I soon began to sell my clothes, panhandle and borrow money, to satisfy a craving for drink.

"And now follows the story of my rescue:

"It was on October 8, 1905, on Sunday morning, at 6.30 o'clock, after walking the streets nearly all night, as I had often done before, catching a little sleep here and there on doorsteps and trucks, wandering around tired, hungry and hopeless, almost insane and almost frozen from exposure. I thought I could get a little sleep or rest in a saloon where I had spent most of the days and nights of seven weeks. Here had gathered, as usual, from twenty to twenty-five men, of all classes and conditions, and who had spent the whole night there, most of them in a drunken stupor. Many of these men had been my companions for seven weeks.

"I had hardly reached the inside door of the saloon, before I was told to get out, the proprietor saying I was a disgrace to the place, and that he did not want me there any more. I thank God for that crucial moment. Turning right-about-face, I took an inventory of myself.

"'If I am a disgrace to this place,' I said, 'I surely am of no use to myself, my friends, or my family, and I had better put an end to it all.' It was with this idea of self-destruction in mind, that I wandered down to South Street near the East River. I then realized where I was, and, sitting down, wept like a child. God must have



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The Meeting Room where Mr. Rafter was converted—He is seen sitting at the left of Supt. Wyburn, who stands behind the desk

been with me, for as soon as I got near the edge of the pier, a watchman ordered me off, saying I had no right there, and that I had better go home, that if the boss found me there he would lose his job. Then I certainly did think I had no friends.

"An impulse seized me, and, turning, I retraced my steps up Roosevelt Street, where I happened to notice the transparency of the McAuley Mission. I was dirty! My clothes did not fit, being relievers. My shoes were tied on with cords. My shirt and suspenders had gone for rum. Not knowing anything about Missions, I therefore thought that I would not be received there. I sat down on the platform opposite the Mission, remaining there a large part of the day looking at the door wonderingly.

"About three o'clock I noticed a large crowd going in, and it was at this time a poor boy came to me and said, 'Old man, you look tired out.' He slipped a nickel in my hand and told me to get something to eat or drink, at the same time urging me to go in the Mission. I did buy a drink, but I did not have the nerve to enter the Mission that night. I walked the streets the same as the night before. I slept part of that night on a Franklin Square truck where I had so often before got rest. It was cold there, and I moved to the steps of the *New York Press* on Spruce Street. It was there that a fireman came to me from the sub-cellars and gave me a sand-

wich, saying that it would do me good—I thank God for kindness—God had taken me over to Himself.

“Monday I wandered into City Hall Park, but fearing arrest, went down to South Street again, where I thought I could walk about and forget where I was. That night—October 9th—I entered the doors of the dear old Mission, where I was cordially received, and given a seat in the rear of the hall. I listened to the testimonies, and I said to myself, ‘These men are telling my own life story.’ There were twenty-five or thirty testimonies given. I wondered if it were true that God could save a man in my condition. When the invitation was given to go forward, I did so, and got down on my knees and prayed for the first time in twenty years. I asked God to save me, if it was not too late—and oh! how I thank Him for that moment.

“When I arose from my knees, the heavy load was gone. I had been born again in a twinkling. I became a new man in Christ Jesus, and from that instant I have not wanted a drink of liquor. I found my Saviour, and immediately Christian friends gave me the assurance that all would be well, and that God would carry me through if I meant business. These dear friends cleaned me up, gave me clothing, and assisted me in securing work. I entered the employ of my good friend Louis A. Lehmaier’s printing house as a compositor, and in four months was made su-

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perintendent of the plant, and am now treasurer of the company which published this book. I am also connected with other large business interests. God has helped me marvellously in giving me opportunities to improve myself. Let it be known to all, that through the power of prayer I am a redeemed drunkard. The blood of Jesus Christ did it. Oh, I've been wonderfully blessed in many ways. God has given me back my wife, home, other dear ones and a host of friends. He has vouchsafed me a standing among good men, and to-day I enjoy everything that a man should desire. He has taught me how to live a Christian life. God has done it all."

Such were the friends that rallied around me, and they made the bearing of the cross as light as it might be. A great, hardly realizable change came over me. Once I walked certain New York streets—above or below the "dead line"—with a sense of freedom that could be bought from a Police Force which had no aversion to tainted money. Yet that freedom was not entirely separate from concern. There was always the uncertainty to be reckoned with. Arrest was not an impossibility.

Under the new order of my life, I was able to have the freedom of the whole city—all of the streets were mine. The "dead line" was no longer a thing to be considered by me, regardless of how much a Nemesis it had been in some periods of my life. For, I had become a free

man in Christ, and the streets were free to me in the brightest hour of the day, or the blackest hour of the night. There was none to molest, none to disturb me. I had paid the "price"—God's "price"—with the gain all on my side, so wonderful is his mercy and loving-kindness. The gift of my wicked heart was all, everything He required of me. Such was the plan of His glorious salvation, such was the "price" I had paid, and such was the degree of His boundless compassion.

For the "price" he asked me to pay there were privileges multiplied to me beyond all human conception and computation.

I learned to dearly love the Mission work and the noble corps of men and women who labored to rescue the lost, and who placed the value of a soul far beyond the cost of selfish world interests. I came to look upon the soul of the human shipwreck on the shores of time as a priceless gem that would eventually find its setting in the crown of glory of my Master, if I faithfully performed my duty as a servant in Christianity.

Whereas I once, in worldliness, schemed to take riches from the rich by stealth, I learned to scheme in the sunlight of my Master's approbation for the salvation of men's souls, that they might, with me, escape from eternal damnation.

With a thousandfold greater fervency than I possessed in the service of the god of Mammon, I labored to make myself an influence for good.



Underwood & Underwood

A Christmas scene in the McAuley Mission, No. 316 Water Street



In the McAuley Mission I did not deny the sinfulness that recorded against me almost a lifetime spent as an enemy of God. In Old John Street Church, the church of my membership, where I came in contact with Christians in all walks and conditions of life, I endeavored to live what I was—a great, notorious sinner, who had been saved from an awful fate of his own creation.

Both in the Church and the Mission, I found the peace which my hitherto barren life craved, the solace for which my increasing years yearned, as a thirsty soil would drink in the warmth of a torrid summer's first rain. In the Mission I came in contact with all kinds of people from every country and every clime. Indeed, it was not an uncommon occurrence to have several different countries represented at a Mission meeting, and often the millionaire and millionairess touched elbows with a poor fallen Christ-seeking man or woman of the lowest stratum of human existence—each one on his or her knees, humbly uttering the same universal prayer, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner, for Jesus' sake."

When the final trumpet shall proclaim to all the hosts of ten thousand worlds that the Judgment Day has come, and each one of the vast untold millions of the faithful shall stand in immaculate robes before the White Throne, to hear the commendation of the Infinite One, "Well done, good and faithful servant," I doubt not

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that the simple, earnest soul who unselfishly labored in the Water Street Mission, to uplift from the slums the wallowing drunkard and the polluted woman outcast, will receive a crown of glory, whose gems shall reflect the splendors of the sun of the day, and the soft brilliance of the stars of the night, while the angels and the redeemed ones sing in a mighty, swelling chorus to the harmony of countless harps and timbrels, the song of the triumph of righteousness, resurrection and eternal life, over vanquished sin, death, and oblivion in the grave.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PENALTY.

When man violates the laws of nature he incurs a debt that must be paid. The greater the violation, the greater the payment—its fulness being the premature grave—usually.

Transgress the laws of God and remain unrepentant until the race of life is finished, and the penalty is the eternal loss of the soul. These debts must and shall be paid. This is as certain and irrevocable as it is true that God exists, and will mercifully exchange pardon for repentance, even unto the eleventh hour.

Of repentance, thanks be to His name, I can speak as one with authority. Of pardon I am informed, for I have the unmistakable joyous assurance of it. I possess an abiding consciousness of a full pardon that is incontestable. It was acquired through the unerring language of the Omnipotent to the understanding soul.

How my heart thrills with the joy of that understanding. And, again, how it is affrighted at times, with the knowledge of a miraculous escape from the guilt of the unpardonable sin—a repentance almost beyond the pale of pardon. And then the fear vanishes, while a still, small voice whispers encouragingly:

“Fear not, for I will be with thee always.”

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But in this blessed security I have often meditated over the fate of those with whom I associated in my criminal career. Most of them, alas, are dead, having passed out of this life, so I have been informed, without having made their peace with God. A few of them yet live, and my daily prayer has been and will be while there is yet hope, that these may realize the error of their ways, and hear the voice of pardon, ere it be too late.

As I dwell in the realm of retrospection, the forms of these men who figured so tragically in my life pass along, one after another. My heart grows heavy as I view the parade of human souls, surrounding whom there is so much uncertainty as to their standing in eternity. Some of them showed me no brotherly love, while others drifted along in the same zone of wickedness with me. In regard to these latter, there is no doubt that I failed in my duty to them, and because of it I shall ever be filled with the deepest regret. Oh, that I had heard and heeded God's call sooner, that I might have repented of my sins, and in consequence have been of more use in the world.

Herbert T. Bellows presents the most sorrowful picture of the regrettable past that looms up vividly before me. I have told much of him in "From Boniface to Bank Burglar." If it be possible for me to stand at the bar of God with him, I shall be glad. The news I want to hear is, that he died a true Christian, even as I now hope to

do. It will be glad tidings of great joy, for which my heart will sing amen and amen. But if he is unsaved even at so tardy a day, I will plead in the name of Jesus that none of the evil he wrought in my life be charged against him beyond forgiveness. Though Herbert Bellows did strike a blow that changed the whole tenor of my early life, there is no hardness in my heart for him. And though I was driven into the shadowy road of crime as the result of his persecutions together with my own weakness to which I humbly confess, my heart throbs with sorrow for him.

It shall not be charged by me that Herbert Bellows was punished on earth for his sins. Of that no man should set himself up as a judge. But it is a fact that he was, in his lifetime, possessed of many friends, integrity, large wealth, of great political power, and at his death was hopelessly friendless, irretrievably discredited, in grinding poverty, and wholly abandoned by all men. His very last hours were passed in a dismal room, cold for the want of fuel, and dark because there were no pennies in the family purse to buy oil. In bare truth, he filled a pauper's grave.

When the Judgment Day shall have come, and we are all arraigned before the Great Judge, I yearn to be near Herbert Bellows and whisper in his ear, "Herbert, you did not realize what you were doing in those days. Can you forgive me for the bitterness I harbored for you? God has

cancelled that note of sin for me, and satisfied the judgment thereof."

Next in the procession before me, I can see F. F. Lane. He was the District Attorney of Cheshire County, New Hampshire, and prosecuted the indictment that blasted my young life. Lane was Herbert Bellows' friend, and did his bidding to the utmost. I am wondering what excuse F. F. Lane will offer on the Judgment Day for the part he took in the transaction that involved the fair name of my noble father and loving mother, and brought dishonor upon their son. What will he say when the indictment "Hypocrite" is read from the Recording Angel's book of dark recollections? Will he plead in the fulness of a contrite, regenerate soul, "Lord, Thou knowest I posed in Thy Church before the people on earth as a proud, upright man of God, and set a goodly example in the eyes of my fellow-men, even while I was, in secret, abetting infamy, prosecuting and persecuting innocence, and accepting bribes from polluted hands, and yet, Thou, God, didst forgive me wholly in the hour of true repentance for it all, glory be to Thy name."

Aye, in the last day, the crack of doom, such a plea from F. F. Lane, the lawyer of Keene, New Hampshire, will fill my heart with thanksgiving, for the horror of an eternity of torment in one's soul can only be understood by the Omnipotent conception. If I found it difficult to forgive F. F.

The people of the State of New York,

Ye all to Whom these Presents shall Come:

Whereas, At a court held in and for our County of Oneida in the month of February 1897,
George W. White alias Thomas J. Jones
was convicted of Burglary, third degree
State Prison at Utica, at hard labor, for the term of five years

which term he served subject to the legal deduction for good conduct, and
he being represented unto us as worthy of being restored to the rights of a citizen:

Therefore, Know Ye, That we have pardoned, remitted and released, and by these Presents do pardon, remit and release to
said George W. White alias Thomas J. Jones
and from all sentences, judgments and executions thereon, and he is hereby restored to all the rights of a citizen. Provided, however, and the
judicial and executive to citizenship is granted upon the express understanding that it does not and shall not entail, and in any way interfere with any
condition or conditions upon which the said George W. White alias Thomas J. Jones was released from imprisonment, as upon which any
slavery or general commutation or diminution of sentence, or any pardon was granted or afforded to him. And this pardon and restoration to citizenship is granted
where and in all respects subject to such condition or conditions, if any, and shall become void upon any violation thereof.

In Testimony Whereof, We have caused these our Letters to be made Public,
and the Great Seal of our said State to be hereunto affixed.
Witness, THEODORE ROOSEVELT, Governor of our said State, at our city of Albany,
the second day of December, in the year of our Lord
one thousand nine hundred

Passed the Secretary's Office, the
22 day of Decr. 1900. }
John M. Morgan
Secretary of State.

J. Roosevelt

Facsimile of the Pardon granted to Mr. White by Theodore Roosevelt,
as Governor of New York State

Lane, I would question the validity of my peace with God. No, no, no! I have diligently searched my heart and in it there is no resentment, and I do forgive him fully and freely, as it behooves me to do, who knows what it is to have a sinful life washed clean by the blood of Jesus Christ.

In penning "From Boniface to Bank Burglar" I demonstrated what the life of a law breaker is, veneered with allurements. There was put forward the brightest side of a man's life given over to crime. One having read the various chapters of veracious and vivid experiences, becomes unconsciously sympathetic. At the outset my readers grasped the awfulness of the wrongs I suffered, and I won their profound pity. And then they marvelled not in the least, when revenge stormed my heart and bitterness filled my soul.

When I escaped from persecutions, these same sympathetic and unmarvelling ones lifted their heads high with broad approval. Free from durance, penniless in a great city, and in danger of betrayal back into the clutches of the enemy, these friendly followers of my unfortunate career gasped in dismay when I robbed the first bank under their very eyes, and regained in booty an amount more than equal to all I had been defrauded of. Shocked that I had become a thief, yet they condoned the crime, and forgave the criminal, knowing the magnitude of his wrongs.

Following me, faithfully, they fathomed my new motive. Having regained my stolen fortune, the new motive was to steal from the rich, who could afford to lose, and never to exact from the poor what must further impoverish them. In this I gained more sympathy from the observers of my fortunes. And, as I rapidly progressed in the highway of crime, which grew broader and broader as my experience lengthened and correspondingly multiplied my golden returns, these sympathizers, presently, came to be admirers of my skill.

When my carefully prepared schemes, involving months of labor and small fortunes to complete them, failed to net me millions, their regrets were as poignant as mine. When I corrupted young bank clerks and watchmen of banks, as tools in looting vaults and safes, and gained hundreds of thousands, these same admirers gloated with me, and applauded my genius as a burglar. If, again, I adroitly escaped the penalty for a crime by evading the officers of the law, or bribed the police, these friends, in their gladness, unconsciously lost sight of the crime, and glorified the skill of the one who could vanquish the law. When justice triumphed in my capture, and my penalty fated me to a Prison-Cell, these perusers of my chronicle were as gloomy and disconsolate as I, under restraint, cursed the fate that cut me off, temporarily, from the pursuit of conquest and pelf.

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And so I was able to control the minds of these readers to the end of the final chapter, mindful the while of the dual objects to be attained. One was the seeking of a means to justify my plunge into crime, the other the weaving of a frail fabric of criminal achievement, with all of the superficial allurements possible, that its ultimate rending might disclose to the reader the hellishness it secreted, and the penalty that must, inevitably, be paid by the adherent of crime.

The former object, I did attain, but in such a degree that I have repented of it. The bitterness of my soul, as it pondered over the wrongs of earlier days, expanded beyond the bounds of Christian forbearance, and in attaining that object, the good was overshadowed by the aggrandizement of self.

My failure, in this regard, was so signal that I humbly petitioned God to use it as an instrument for good, poor, weak thing that it was.

But, in vivifying the allurements of the burglar-craft, I feel that I have been unusually successful. I have glorified crime, and the criminal—may it demonstrate ever so forcefully how hellish is crime, and how tremendous is the descending crash of the criminal. For “The way of the transgressor is hard,” and “The wages of sin is death.”

Sin is death to all that is good here on earth, and if unrepented of, a living death in eternity. It robs the body and ruins the life, sets a-tremble the stoutest heart, and besets the soul with an

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ever present, aching fear of an unknown, undefined something that haunts man with the persistence of his shadow.

I have blazoned my career of crime, and may the penalty I paid be the more surely grasped and profited by. What my transgressions netted me is only an example of the profit that must come to all transgressors of whatever degree.

Again, I must not be accused of judging the acts of my fellow-men as individuals, nor of saying that what befell them on earth is a just penalty. That is, as I have already tried to explain, a prerogative of Divinity. In relating what befell men more or less associated with me in the past, I but state facts. If these facts bespeak a penalty, then let God be the judge. It is for us to recognize the truth, and direct our lives accordingly. I do repeat, in the light of wide experience, and in all solemnity, that "The way of the transgressor is hard," and should be avoided.

As I look over the procession of evil men who figured in my life, it is to compile a long list of lamentable failures, climaxed by death, in which example seemed to justify the Scriptural teaching, that it does not profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and in the end lose his immortal soul.

I have in mind my old associate Mark Shinburn, or Baron Schoenbirn, as the police records have described him. Through his unconscious

aid I was involved in crime, as my preceding book relates. That was more than forty years ago. He escaped at the time from a ten-year term in the Concord State Prison of New Hampshire. To-day, after many intervening years, he is in a Cell at Concord paying the penalty of a crime committed in 1864.

As I write, he is an unrepentant, tottering, friendless old man on the verge of the grave, threatening to beat out his brains on the bars or walls of his Cell. May God reach his hard heart before it is too late.

Shinburn was a multi-millionaire when we dissolved our partnership in crime in 1869. He went to Frankfort-on-the-Main in Germany, and bought a large estate, and the title of Baron. But he lost the fortune gained in crime, and, returning to the old life, became involved with the law, resulting in his recapture and incarceration in his declining years.

James Cummings, who was associated with him in that early crime, died years later in poverty and unregretted.

William Meagher, or Billy Matthews, as he is known in my book, who was a friend of Shinburn's, and later of myself, accumulated considerable money as a gambler and accomplice of thieves. He, too, lost all, and when old age was pressing hard, descended to the bookmaker's stall at racing paddocks, for a precarious existence. Health failing him, he was sent to Hot Springs,

Arkansas, by his gambler friends. Death claimed him in the early part of 1906. These same gambler friends stood between him and a numbered grave on Hart's Island, the Potter's Field of N. Y.

No less sad and impressive was the early departure of others I knew through long personal acquaintanceship. Jim Burns, who, with "The Congressman," stole \$20,000 from the Treasury Department at Washington, D. C., became pitifully poor, and in great despondency in Paris ended his life with a bullet. "The Congressman," though never arrested for his participation in the crime, was avoided by all good men, and died in poverty.

Jim Griffin, the famous bank sneak, who figured in one of my biggest robberies, died in destitution while a prisoner in a Police Station at Newark, New Jersey.

George Wilkes, who was a king among forgers, a living exponent of the theory of "honor among thieves," squandered fortunes, and filled a grave provided by charity.

"Tall Jim" was one of my closest associates in crime. He is yet alive and was unrepentant the last time I saw or heard of him. As a practicing physician in a middle Western State, he had attained renown, wealth, and a beautiful, confiding wife, who has no knowledge of his criminal past. In New York State he has relatives of affluence, but he never visits or communicates with them. It is as though he were dead.

I have it on excellent authority that his life is a continual nightmare of apprehension. Retribution personified meets him in giant shapes, at dawn, in the noontime, at twilight, and in the midnight hour. Once, he did murder. A guardian of the law stood between him in the Cell and freedom. The death blow was dealt. Now the fear that the law will find him out conjures the unexpected rustle of a leaf, or the whistle of the wind, into giants of terror. Though these haunting spectres render him a cringing coward, yet more awful is the constant dread that the trusting, unsuspecting wife, whom he loves to madness, will hear the truth, and know him as "Tall Jim" the Murderer.

Still another dread storms his soul, and is ever whispering in his frightened ears, "Beware!" The officials of Sing Sing Prison want him, and would tear him away from the companionship of his beloved wife, if they but knew where to find him—"Tall Jim," who owes the larger part of a sentence for burglary committed more than a score and a half years ago.

All these secrets he has buried in his bosom. How great must be the burden thus borne in secret. How horrible to bear it alone, to live another life separate from that of his adored wife, and of which life he would not have her a part for all the wealth of combined worlds.

And unrepentant "Tall Jim," the accomplished gentleman, physician, the murderer, the fugitive

from justice, the deceiver of a noble woman, surrounded by wealth, petted by society, which believes him to be all he appears to be, lives on tormented by a dread so horrible that it must be indescribable.

Oh God! if it be that this man is now paying the penalty for his misdeeds, how great must the price be. I would that "Tall Jim" were of a mind to cast the awful burden upon the all-sustaining Power. But would that entail a full confession of his sins to the whole world? This question I have asked of myself times innumerable. Perhaps so. But the world, the law and those administering it—what would they all say, or do? Forgive him? Nay, nay, nay! The world would cry out in horror, and recede yet further in its robe of self-righteousness. And what of the law of man? Adamant, it would claim its due. Inexorable, it would rightfully gather in the victim who offended it. There would be no deviation that a woman's heart might remain undisturbed in its supreme love and wifely trust, or that her sweet dignity might not be brought low in the dust of a blighting, withering shame. All that lofty sentiment which appeals to the souls of those bathed in the milk of human kindness, and dwellers in the realm of pity, would be crushed low by the wheels of the swift moving chariot of justice.

But what of God? Would He lend a listening ear to "Tall Jim's" secret prayer, the laying bare

of his sinful soul, and lavish on him the peace that passeth all understanding, which is the fruit of Divine forgiveness?

It is not for me to know—that is a problem to be solved between God and “Tall Jim.” How could I, so great a sinner, know? Nor dare I to assume to judge “Tall Jim” for his criminal deeds. If I dared to attempt to pass judgment upon him, my humiliation would be complete. For how manifold were my transgressions against God and his Divine law. Unlike “Tall Jim,” I never took the life of man, but in the desperate calling in which I was engaged, it might have happened. Inadvertently, as I trust it was in his experience, I might have shed blood. Thanks be to His holy name and mercy, my soul was not thus weighted. But what more could I say to justify myself if I would? Not an iota. I bow my head in shame, and only lift it at the word of my Lord and Master, who has bidden me to look and live.

Now that I have cast myself fully on the loving kindness of the Redeemer, the dark clouds that hung so threateningly over me have been dissipated by the warm sunshine of Divine approval. I am traveling on a highway that leads to real peace and happiness—Heavenward, and not to perdition. What this nearly diametrical altering of my course has meted me, is too great for mere language to accurately and adequately portray. Whereas all was darkness and uncer-

tainty, there is open before me a well-defined, perfectly illuminated Christian vista, whose tendency is ever upward and away from the lowlands of sin inhabited by the cohorts of Giant Despair.

While this highway of the mountain surely leads to God I am mindful of its narrowness and difficult windings, and how, to my shame, I have slipped to the wayside, struggled up again, fallen again and doggedly pressed onward, acquiring, through bitter experience, the knowledge that I must be eternally vigilant, must be ever armed with an unwavering faith, and an unalterable belief in the efficacy of prayer, if I eventually possess the everlasting Crown of Righteousness.

Each day's travel renders the journey easier, puts greater distance between me and the discarded burden of sin, and fits me to better tell of the joys of the new life, to those who yet pursue the ignis fatuus, which is dazzling them onward and downward into the quicksands of procrastination, where are heard the wailings of the hopeless and the lost, whose vain regrets are voiced in the awful significance of:

“What might have been.”

Oh, would I were able to tell all that God has done for me. I would shout it from the highest mountain tops so that all might hear, know and be saved. I would I were endowed with a gift to paint a vivid picture of my black life, and yet another one of the different man, regenerated

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through the blood of Jesus Christ the Saviour. In one picture I would point out the weary, friendless, almost crippled old man, loaded with his unmanageable pack of sin. He would be seen slowly tottering along toward the inevitable grave, his weary body trembling, and his ashen face reflecting his hopelessness in a fate believed to have been irrevocably fixed.

I would that I were endowed with the power to show the helping hand of God outstretched toward this aged man, who, realizing his last chance for salvation, would cry out, "Lord, Lord, I believe!"

See! The great pack of sin then rolls from his pitifully bent and decrepit old shoulders. The pain-inflicting shackles, clanking, fall from his feet, and he stands erect, another, a newer man. His face, which was, but a moment before, a mere mask of death, lights up with the glory of a soul illumined of God. In the place of repining and hopelessness, there is new-born joy and laughter. Eyes once dull and watery, snap with the fire of regeneration, and hitherto faltering, unmusical lips sing loud pæans of praise. With buoyant feet and flinging arms the inspired soul bounds along in the highway of God, beckoning wildly for his fellows, still in the bondage of sin, to hasten on and join him in his belief in Jesus, Who is willing and anxious to save them.

Aye, in such straits God found me. I was spiritually blind, and He gave me sight. I was

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lame and halt, plodding along in the broad road of sin, and God set me on my feet, and bade me run in the King's Highway of Righteousness.

Come out of the ranks of sin, oh, fellow-man, and believe in the Redeemer as I believe in him. Escape from the awful, the final penalty, as I have escaped, before it is everlasting too late.

THE END.



Joseph J. Rafter, the Redeemed Printer



AFTERWORD

Nearly eighteen months have passed since the death of the honored and much loved Superintendent Samuel Hopkins Hadley, and the appointment of John H. Wyburn to the office of Superintendent of the McAuley Water Street Mission. It was at Mr. Hadley's earnest request—a request that came a few days prior to his death, that his mantle fall upon the trained and able shoulders of the man with whom he had long been associated. At the time of the earthly departing of Mr. Hadley, John H. Wyburn had been converted seventeen years, and the greater part of that period had been spent with Mr. Hadley in Mission work in the McAuley Mission.

What Mr. Hadley thought of Mr. Wyburn, as his successor in this peculiar labor for the Lord, has been related in detail in several pages preceding this afterthought, and it is not necessary to reiterate it at this time. Thousands know Mr. Wyburn, and tens of thousands have heard of him and his work. As a Rescue-worker, as a man of faith, of prayer, tenderness in love, patience, forbearance, pity and long-suffering in treating with the erring, John H. Wyburn is the equal of any man living. And it is not surprising that it is so, when the years he spent in the work

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with that Prince of Rescue-workers, Mr. Hadley, are taken into consideration.

In the past months the work of the Mission has progressed wondrously, under the watchful and prayerful effort of the beloved Superintendent. The interest in the diligent reaching out after weary souls lost in sin, has increased greatly, and the testimonies from Converts in earnest of it, have been unusually stamped with sincerity and have been profoundly convincing. All this happy fruition, has been the result of a largely increased attendance at the nightly meetings. Of those saved from sin very recently, many have proved themselves to be remarkably bright, and evinced a capability highly gratifying to the devout workers of the Mission. They have been aided and given food, shelter, and clothing, until in a position to help themselves. A large percentage of these have secured profitable employment, having exemplified the truth of the words, "They sought first the Kingdom of God." These new Converts were so enthused over their deliverance from a lost condition, that they have, ever since, been telling their friends to resort to the same remedy to cure their ills.

Thus the work of the Mission, for the past months, has been one perpetual revival. Its force of laborers has been largely increased through the rending of the chains of drunkenness and kindred evils, and these men happily free, stand

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ready to go anywhere to tell the story of deliverance—the story of how Christ Jesus proclaims liberty for the captive, and how he stands ready and anxious to save.

How to furnish employment for the Mission's Converts, has always been a problem for serious consideration. A partial solution of it came, happily, through the suggestion of Mr. Joseph J. Rafter, that a printing and binding company be established whose employes should be drawn from the Converts of the Mission, in so far as they could be utilized to promote the success of the enterprise. The suggestion met with the instant approval of Superintendent Wyburn. Mr. Rafter, being a printer of national reputation, at once became an important factor in the work of creating a printing company on the lines mentioned. His renown as an artisan in his profession, peculiarly fitted him into the plan which soon became a verity. Working in perfect unison these energetic Converts of the Mission, soon established the Seaboard Press with Lee L. Crittenden as president, for the purpose of doing general printing. Subsequently it was decided to add book publishing to the enterprise and a separate company was organized under the head of the Seaboard Publishing Company, of which John H. Wyburn was made president. Both institutions were incorporated under the laws of New York State, and are now thoroughly

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equipped with the most modern requirements of the trade, including a Linotype Department. As contemplated, a number of the Mission's Converts are being furnished with employment, and as rapidly as others become available through knowledge of what is required of them, they will be added to the working force. Thus far the Converts have found no small degree of assistance in starting out in the Christian life, and it is the earnest desire of the projectors of these companies to create employment for as many struggling ones who are young in the espousal of Christianity as possible. To realize this laudable end, the Seaboard Press and the Seaboard Publishing Company must expand their plants so that they can employ hundreds of hands. Success of course depends upon the quality of work turned out, and as orders are multiplying daily, the prospect of a largely increased business in the very near future is highly gratifying in whatever aspect the enterprise is regarded.

Mr. John S. Huyler, philanthropist and president of the Mission believed in the enterprise from its inception and came to its assistance financially. Consequently the success hoped for seems absolutely assured.

At the present time the Seaboard Press is turning out all kinds of modern printing. It makes a specialty of personal embossed stationery, cards, etc., also Church calendars, invitation

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cards, and, in fact everything required by Churches and Christian workers. Christian friends and all others are invited to inspect the plants. Also, if they have work to be done, Mr. Rafter, the chief of the Estimating Department, will be glad to furnish estimates on short notice.

With Mr. Rafter is Lee Crittenden, also widely known in the printing profession. It can be depended upon that first class work in every particular will be the result of every order received.

The Seaboard Publishing Company has published several books, and others are in press. Among these are "From Boniface to Bank Burglar," and "The Penalty and Redemption." As a work of art in the printing line, the latter easily leads the list, as an examination of its pages will reveal.

Mr. Rafter was also a member of the editorial staff of the Inland Printer of Chicago. The editor says:

"Estimating has come to be a very important factor in the printing business. One must understand the work thoroughly to intelligently make a price that will be profitable to the employer and at same time give the customer the benefit of experience and knowledge of the art. We have been fortunate in securing the services of Mr. Jos. J. Rafter who is one of our foremost printers, to conduct this department, one of the most important of the paper. We have many times been

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delighted in looking over samples of his work when at the case. He is a practical compositor, pressman and lithographer, and has been connected with some of our largest concerns as superintendent or manager. Printers and others are invited to make use of this department. You will find Mr. Rafter ever ready to give any and all information requested."

GEORGE M. WHITE.

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